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INNER LIFE

Of the Christian.



BY

✓
REV. FREDERICK A. RAUCH, D.P.,

FIRST PRESIDENT OF MARSHALL COLLEGE;
AND AUTHOR OF "PSYCHOLOGY, OR A VIEW OF THE HUMAN SOUL."

EDITED BY

REV. E. V. GERHART,

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P R E F A C E.

REV. FREDERICK AUGUSTUS RAUCH, born in Kirchbracht, Hesse Darmstadt, July 27th, 1806, was a graduate of the University of Marburg; subsequently he prosecuted the study of Philosophy and Theology in Giessen and Heidelberg, and was then appointed Professor of Philosophy successively in these two celebrated Universities. Becoming obnoxious to Government by the expression of rather liberal political sentiments, he emigrated to America in 1831, and spent nearly a year in Easton, Pennsylvania, where he was elected Professor of the German Language in Lafayette College. In the fall of 1832, he was elected Principal of a Classical School, located at York, Pa., and filled the office for three years with superior ability and great success. In 1835, the School was removed to Mercersburg, and converted into a college by a charter from the Legislature of the State, under the name and title of Marshall College. Dr. Rauch was chosen President. In this capacity he labored with extraordinary self-denial, diligence, and

zeal until March, 1841, a period of five years, when it pleased an all-wise Providence to call him to his reward. He died in the thirty-fifth year of his age, just when his intellectual vigor had fully matured, and he was turning his profound scholarship and extensive erudition to greatest account for the kingdom of Christ.

From the time that Dr. Rauch arrived in America, he had devoted himself with great assiduity to the study of the language of his adopted country, and soon acquired a thorough knowledge of its laws and idioms; and, if we except pronunciation, he may be said to have mastered nearly all its peculiarities. Hence he began to use the English language in the class-room as soon as he took charge of the School at York. But when he became President of Marshall College, he felt that his duty to the Institution demanded something more. He opened a regular Sunday Service in the College Chapel for the particular benefit of the students, and took his turn with his colleagues in the public preaching of the Gospel. As these discourses were elaborated generally with special care, and have frequently been solicited for the press by those who are cognizant of their intrinsic value, a number of them were placed in the hands of the Editor for revision and publication about a year ago by a relative of the Author; and the present volume is the result.

To the surviving pupils of Rauch, to the later students of the College over which he presided, as well as to the literary and religious community in general who

have learned to venerate his name through his profound and popular work on Psychology, we doubt not this volume will be an acceptable offering. It exhibits his spirit and character as a Christian, the nature of his labors as a minister of the Gospel, and his method of thinking in its direct application to the Christian religion. Though not popular in the prevailing sense of the word, he was nevertheless as faithful, instructive and efficient in the pulpit as he was thorough, interesting and successful in the lecture-room. A clear conception of the Divine personality of Jesus Christ in His vital relation to the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, gave a distinctive tone to all his discourses. In some, philosophical discussion is predominant, and for this reason such may properly be called philosophico-theological dissertations. In others, clear thought and tender feeling are beautifully blended. But, though the determining influence of his philosophical thinking upon the order of discussion and upon his views of Divine truth, is always seen and felt, yet the recognition of Jesus Christ as the true God, as the only way of salvation, and of the Sacred Scriptures as alone possessing normal authority for faith and practice, reigns supreme in all, and gives them an eminently Christian and practical character, as distinguished both from vapid sentimentalism on the one hand, and rationalistic speculation on the other. For he tested the truth of all his views in theology and philosophy, by the positive teachings of Christ and His Apostles.

The volume acquires interest also from the fact that Dr. Rauch was properly the founder of Marshall College. Under the influence of his powerful mind, sustained by many friends of classical education in the German Reformed Church, the Institution was brought into successful operation. By his energy, scholarship, and self-sacrificing devotion, aided by the efficient labors of Professor Samuel W. Budd, its first reputation for literary and scientific character was acquired. More than this, however. The first impulse to the mode of thinking which has distinguished this Institution through its whole history from many similar Institutions, it received from the system of Philosophy which Dr. Rauch inculcated. He aimed at reproducing the truth of German philosophy under an English form in the light of supernatural revelation. Thus he infused an Anglo-German life into the College, which, though modified and perfected by his successors, it has nevertheless retained to the present time. The volume now offered to the public, nearly sixteen years after the Author's death, illustrates the fact that the first President of Marshall College was a decided and humble Christian no less than a philosopher; that his philosophy was neither rationalism nor pantheism, neither sensationalism nor transcendentalism in any false sense, but really Christian; and that the impulse and peculiar character, which the Institution received from him in the beginning, was not hostile or prejudicial, as some have alleged, to sound Christian ideas, but subservient

and favorable to the progress of orthodox scientific theology and true practical religion.

As these Discourses were not prepared for publication by the Author, it was necessary to subject them to a careful revision. This the Editor has endeavored to do. A pupil of Dr. Rauch for nearly eight years, and having lived in intimate friendship with him, especially during the latter part of his life, the Editor flatters himself that he possesses some qualifications for the delicate and responsible task. He laid down two principles of revision, which have been rigidly applied from beginning to end. First, to limit the revision strictly to the work of *editing* the Discourses—to make such changes, but such only, touching the use of *particles* and *phrases*, as the Editor believes the Author himself would have made were he now revising the work for the press. Secondly, to preserve every phase of thought, and retain all the peculiarities of the Author's style, with scrupulous fidelity. No liberty whatever has been taken with the language in these respects. Verbal modifications have been made only in order to remove traces of the German idiom, and convey clearly the evident meaning of the Author throughout in a purely English style.

In making a selection for the present volume, the Editor has been guided partly by the comparative merits of the Discourses, and partly by a reference to an order of subjects. It was felt to be desirable that the book possess as much unity and logical connection

as it was possible to give to it under the circumstances.

It was the practice of Dr. Rauch to write out carefully the first or principal prayer used at public worship. As these prayers are edifying and aid in affording the reader an insight into the spirit and character of the man, we have allowed them to hold their proper place. A number are manifestly incomplete, but they have been inserted without any additions. In some cases the prayer is wanting entirely in the manuscript.

With these preliminary remarks we submit this posthumous work to the Christian community, and commend it to the blessing of Him in whose service the Author lived and labored and died.

E. V. G.

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA,

Oct. 13th, 1856.

CONTENTS.

	Page
THE PRINCIPLE OF THE INNER LIFE,	13
THE COMMUNION OF THE INNER LIFE,	34
THE NURTURE OF THE INNER LIFE,	49
THE FRUITS OF THE INNER LIFE,	69
THE HUMILITY OF THE INNER LIFE,	87
THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE AT JACOB'S WELL, . .	109
THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE AS A SERVANT, . . .	125
THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE BEARING HIS CROSS, .	136
THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE ON THE CROSS, . . .	149
THE LOVE OF THE INNER LIFE,	162
THE INNER LIFE OF THOMAS,	175
THE INNER LIFE OF MARY MAGDALENE,	198
THE SOCIAL JOYS OF THE INNER LIFE,	220

	Page
THE INNER LIFE A SONG OF PRAISE, . . .	245
THE INNER LIFE A PILGRIMAGE, . . .	268
THE FINAL CONFLICT OF THE INNER LIFE, . .	289
THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE INNER LIFE, . . .	315

THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE INNER LIFE.

ACTS 17 : 18.

“Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.”

LORD, our Heavenly Father! Thou art Light and Holiness, but we are sinners. Whatever is good and noble proceeds from Thee, and has its origin in Thee; but whatever is evil and sinful, takes its rise in our hearts and flows forth from them into our thoughts and words and actions. Thou givest what is good and perfect; we abuse it and make it a source of evil. All thy laws, Lord! are good and perfect; thy institutions and commandments are good and tend to the welfare of all created beings; but we, Lord! dishonor them, disobey them, violate them, and thus change the intended source of bliss into a fountain of misery. This, Lord! is our guilt, that we abuse Thy gracious goodness, and do not acknowledge Thee as the

Author and Ruler of the universe, and do not love Thee as our Benefactor and Preserver.

Lord ! we pray that Thou wilt make us sensible of this our great guilt ; that Thou wilt open our blind eyes and shed the Light of Thy Spirit upon them, that we may be able to see Thee and Thy perfections, to adore and worship Thee, and to honor Thee by devoting every power, every wish, and every thought to Thy service. O that we were enabled, Lord ! all of us, to see that the sin of all sin, the root and seat of all vices and all evil activities, is our unbelief ; that we cannot be good and virtuous without faith.

May we acknowledge this, O Lord ! with becoming humility, and lay aside all pride, all reliance on our own strength, and all hope in our own righteousness. May we come before Thee with humbleness and meekness and say : Here, Lord ! we are ready to receive the operations of Thy Holy Spirit. May we lay aside the weapons of an unregenerated reason, of wit and acuteness, and cease fighting against our Maker ; with a contrite heart may we desire and long for Him who loved us unto death ; and may we consider it our highest blessing while we live, and our highest consolation in the hour of death, that we were privileged to praise the Lord and serve Him.

We pray, Lord ! that Thou wilt be with us as we are assembled here to-day. Strengthen those among us that believe in Thee, and increase their know-

ledge and love; be with those that are still out of Christ; show them their perilous situation and constrain them, by seeing it, to hasten to the cross. May they feel, Lord! that without faith none is acceptable to Thee. May they admit in their hearts, that the length of time allotted to them is unknown to them and to all of us, but that there is nothing more certain than death, and after death, the judgment. May they flee from Thy wrath and accept the offers of mercy, whilst they have it in their power.

Bless all thy people, wherever they worship Thee to-day.*

Unbelief in its general results, is everywhere the same; but it may spring from essentially different fountains, and from them draw a nourishment which makes it more or less dangerous to those within the reach of its influence. When a rude and uncultivated man, belonging to a low state of cultivation although living in a civilized country, laughs at the emotions of a pious and devoted Christian; when he acknowledges nothing but what is accessible to his unrefined sensibility—we neither feel offended, nor do we see any dangers arising from his influence. His senses are obtuse, his thinking power unexercised, his whole disposition bent to the earth on which he lives; hence his unbelief, basing itself

* The conclusion of this prayer and of some others, was evidently not written. But we give them without any additions, as we find them in the manuscript.—ED.

upon a degradation of human nature, rather *disgusts* than *alarms* us.

Again, if a sensual and voluptuous man, who has made pleasure the object of his life, denies the existence of God, and scorns the idea of a Saviour and of the immortality of the soul, we know that the cause of his infidelity is a wish to be unmolested by the voice of conscience, when he is about to deceive innocence, or break a promise, or empty the cup of sensuality, or serve all the contemptible desires of his depraved heart. When such men avow their infidelity we feel disgusted; our moral sense stamps them with contempt; our judgment perceives a poisonous fruit that has grown on the tree of sin and vice. Against such infidelity we need not warn men—it is not attractive but repulsive.

It is far otherwise, when men whom Providence has gifted with many talents, whom constant application has adorned with knowledge, and whom faithfulness has rendered useful as citizens and eminent in their profession; when men who lead an honest and blameless life, who do not scoff at religion, nor look down with an eye of pity on its adherents; when such men do not embrace Christ by faith, but caught by the net of infidelity, tear asunder the ties which bind them to their Saviour; when, though they do not doubt a Providence, a First Cause of all, nor an eternity, they are, nevertheless, strangers to the altar, and visit the assem-

blies of Christians only as critics, but not from a desire for religious instruction : the respect which their wisdom and moral life secure to them, forbids us to disregard their indifference to religion ; for it misleads the unwary, ensnares the unsuspecting, and arrests the attempts of youth to enter the narrow path, which leads through thorns and briers to Heaven. This is the unbelief of which the text speaks.

At first sight, it might appear that the unbelief of the Epicureans was that of levity ; for we are accustomed to look upon them as mere sensualists. History, however, proves, that their philosophical system tended not only to, but terminated in, that of the Stoics, whose names are associated in our memory with great and grave wisdom. The principle of Epicureanism was a *refined* and *prudent self-love*, which prompted the endeavor to reduce *pains* and *wants* to the smallest, and increase *pleasures* to the highest degree ; to select of all pleasures those that were both most refined and most durable, and always to preserve an unclouded serenity. This latter point led to Stoicism ; for in order to be cheerful constantly, we must feel entirely independent of all things around us, neither *fear* nor *hope* too ardently, but always be ready to resign every wish and every possession. A wise man, in their opinion, was one, who, free from every fear and hope, free from the dominion of every passion, was ever conscious of his moral greatness and felt the

highest gratification in viewing his own virtues. In these the happiness of man was placed. Thus every one was, or sought to be, the author of his own fortune during life. The unbelief of the Epicureans and Stoics can, therefore, not be classed with that proceeding from levity, nor with that whose source is an obtuse mind; it took its origin in too high an estimate placed by them upon their wisdom or upon their reason.

This undue estimation is even in our day a prolific source of indifference to religion; I have, therefore, made it the subject of my present discourse. My design is to show that, though reason and faith are not at war with each other, and though reason is a high gift of man, yet it is not the proper criterion to be applied in judging of Christianity, nor can its attacks upon Christianity ever destroy it.

I. In attempting to show this, I neither desire to lower the value of reason, as if religion can gain in proportion as reason loses, nor to attribute to faith what really does not belong to it. In comparing one with the other, I am ready at once to admit, that reason is the highest gift we possess in a state of nature. It is reason, which makes man the lord of the earth and renders him the most wonderful of all creatures. It is reason, that puts the bridle into the mouth of the horse to subdue him, that spreads the net in the air to catch the swift-

flying bird, and throws the angle into the water to entice its inhabitants. It is reason, that leads off the lightning from our houses, that makes the ocean yield its tribute, that governs the elements, and renders what in itself is destructive and awful, useful to man. It is reason, that measures the distances and dimensions of the stars of heaven, that foretells the regular return of the seasons, and, sinking itself into its own unfathomable depth, constructs systems of science, discovers the secret powers of nature, and with the wings of a Dædalus finds its way out of every labyrinth to the centre of light.

But everything human has its two sides. The same reason, which is so wonderful in itself and does such wonderful things, in a state of nature, labors only for our own interests, for the gratification of our depraved desires and passions. It has not only invented the instruments with which we cultivate the field, but also the machinery with which we torture and destroy our fellow-men. Reason not only remembers the injury done us and meditates revenge, but even hates those whom we have offended, calumniates our brother, and converts truth into falsehood whenever our advantage may seem to require it. He is frequently thought to be the wisest, who knows best how to use the failings of others for his own benefit, who is most cunning and crafty in the abuse of confidence placed in him, and of candor and honesty

observed towards him. *Deceptions, quarrels, murders, wars*, are carried on systematically only by the human race and nowhere else in nature ; for to design evil, reason is requisite.

Reason, then, as all must admit, places man indeed at the summit of a fallen creation, but it cannot raise him beyond it ; a member of the whole, he is at the same time the fountain head of depravity. But what reason cannot do, faith effects ; it gives man an entrance into Heaven.

What is faith ? This is the most natural question here. Yet it is extremely difficult to answer it. He who has it, will but rarely inquire into its nature ; and he who has it not, cannot understand it. Who would undertake to describe color to one born blind, or sound to the deaf and dumb ? Light is only where there is an eye to see it, and sound, where there is an ear to hear it : take away the eye and the ear, and light and sound cease to be for us. So it is with faith. No one can understand it, unless he has that in him, which disposes him to perceive it, or, in other words : no one can know what faith is unless he has turned from sin to holiness—from the visible to the invisible—from this earthly abode to our heavenly home. Without repentance there is no faith. Nor can any one, on the other hand, understand what repentance is without faith. Both condition each other, and depend on each other : both proceed from communion with God, our Creator—both are directed and direct man upon his

Father in Heaven. Without faith no one can repent; without repentance no one can believe. He that does not believe in his eternal home, will not turn towards it; he that never turns his mind towards it, will not believe in it. As faith reveals the kingdom of Christ to the understanding and heart, so does repentance open the heart to faith. If we believe without repentance, we deceive ourselves; if we repent without faith, we torture ourselves. The one is contained in the other. The question: What is faith? is difficult to be answered, therefore, not because we can not give a definition of it, but because the best definition will not give him an idea of faith who does not possess it. If I say: Faith is that power, whose equal cannot be found anywhere, the power that gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, life to the dead, it will require faith to believe in it. If I say: It is the power of God, that in the twinkling of an eye heals the sick, gives peace to the troubled and comfort to the afflicted, again faith will be required to believe in it. This power exists and works, but those that do not believe in it, have not the ability to perceive it: so is every spring adorned with beautiful flowers, yet a blind man does not see them: so do the most lovely sounds float around the ears of a deaf man, yet he does not hear them. As long as man is satisfied with the vain things of the earth, as long as his wishes do not extend beyond what is visible, he cannot understand the nature of faith. He may

ask after it, he may even enter upon subtle speculations concerning it, but the gates of Heaven, though open to the eye of faith, will remain closed to his dull and sensual sight. He lives in the dust, from which he is taken and to which he must return ; and what his senses cannot perceive has no existence for him. But to the Christian, faith is that power which connects Heaven and earth, the Creator and the creation ; to him, it is a messenger from God to the soul, a bringer of eternal life, a torch in the darkness of his earthly pilgrimage, a guide to Heaven. This power we have, when we feel the connection between Heaven and earth, between our Creator and ourselves, the Visible and Invisible ; when whatever we desire or undertake, think or do, proceeds spontaneously from the idea of this connection ; this power we have, when, deeply feeling our depravity, we long after purity and holiness, and after the way that leads to both.

II. Having seen that faith and reason differ, let us inquire, in the second place : *Are they necessarily opposed to each other ?*

The opinion of some is that reason is the enemy of faith, and philosophy that of theology. This opinion, if carried out consistently, would lead to the conclusion that faith is *blind*—that in order to believe we must suspend our thinking powers. Faith without thought is superstition ; thinking without faith produces infidelity ; in both cases,

therefore, when faith excludes reason or when reason excludes faith, there is sin and vice. Faith does not exclude reason, but is full of reason, and as all Christians maintain, is based on the best of reasons. Christians do not resign the use of their reason; they think as well as the unbeliever, who prides himself on his own thoughts and wisdom; but Christians think *otherwise*. Faith and reason, do therefore not oppose but include each other; and only when our depraved desires apply the one where the other ought to prevail, do they come into conflict. Each of them has its appropriate sphere; and each sphere it will be well to point out in a few words.

Man enjoys many faculties, but each only, when applied to its appropriate object, between which and itself there is a predetermined correspondence, and by which alone its activity can be elicited. So each of our senses has its appropriate object, the eye light, the ear sound; but if we should ever desire to see with the ear or to hear with the eye, we would deprive ourselves of the knowledge which can alone be obtained by making use of the proper sense. So it is likewise, if we attempt to reason where we should believe; we then lose the object of faith, and faith itself. Reason has its appropriate sphere of action. This sphere is life and its concerns, science and its development. God gave man reason, that he might investigate the powers of nature and use them for his service. Without

faith, however, reason can effect but little ; for whatever lies beyond *external* nature, falls within the sphere of faith. We see, for example, the seed cast into the earth put forth its roots, its stem, its branches, leaves, and blossoms ; but the power that works in it, the law, according to which the species preserves itself in its individual plant, we cannot see. From its phenomena we conclude upon the power itself, though our senses cannot perceive it, nor reason demonstrate it. Here, then, begins the sphere of faith—not of the faith of the Christian but of common faith. Where we cannot see things with our eyes, nor ascertain them with our reason, but are nevertheless forced to admit their existence, there we believe. The sphere of natural reason is the Visible, that of faith the Invisible ; without some kind of faith, even the most violent infidel cannot live ; without it he could not eat nor drink, nor have a friend ; or, as some one has said, without it man is confined to himself and stands alone, without father, mother, or friend. And there is no more certainty in the objects of reason, than in those of faith. As the eye demands the light, so the world within demands the existence of the Invisible. What our eyes see we believe, and the ground of belief is found in the formation of the eye and its adaptation to things visible. What faith sees we must believe, and the ground of our belief is the constitution of the soul. The shining light needs nothing else to make itself manifest, because

the eye stands in need of it and desires it. The soul is so constituted that it stands in need of a spiritual world ; but when we need a thing, when we cannot do without it, when without it we cannot reach our purposes, nor preserve, develop, and perfect ourselves, we are ready to believe in it. As our lungs demand the air, and our bodies food, so our souls demand an invisible world of spirit. There are wants which man has created by his own art ; these are not necessary to his existence. There are others, which may be satisfied without faith ; we may nourish our bodies, gratify our senses, quench our thirst for rank, for riches and influence without faith ;—but the wants of the soul, its irresistible desire for eternal happiness, for truth, for holiness, demand a home beyond the skies, and to admit these wants and desires is to believe in that home. What we desire we are inclined to believe ; and what it is impossible for us to do without, we cannot help admitting. And who is there, that would not acknowledge, that though he eats and drinks according to the desire of his heart, he is, nevertheless, not satisfied ; that he constantly seeks something in riches or learning without finding what he seeks ; that he labors, but effects nothing ; that he gathers but gains nothing ; that he is surrounded by abundance, but feels poor. It is faith alone that can satisfy these internal demands of the soul ; hence it is, that we are constrained to believe in the objects of faith, and that faith has as much cer-

tainty for us as the conviction produced by experience.

Why then do we believe in God? Though the faith of the Christian differs widely from the faith just exhibited, the question: Why do we believe in God or in Christ? must be answered on a similar ground. We believe, because the Spirit of truth has operated upon us, and constrained us to acknowledge a Creator of the universe and a Ruler over our lives. There would be a chasm, a flaw, in our thoughts without this belief. We believe in Him, because we acknowledge with a grateful heart the many blessings He has bestowed upon us, the many benefits He has poured out upon the whole creation; because the wonderful order and beauty of the world awake our hearts to love Him; and because thousands and thousands of ties bind us to Him, whose image we are and in whom we live and move and have our being.

And so we believe in Christ, because He offers our hearts what they need; because by His righteousness and passion He has secured to us reconciliation with God; because He has given us the peace we had not, and the salvation which we sought for in vain; because in Him true light, life, grace, and truth appear; because we know His voice and understand it; because we know that He is the good Shepherd, that knows His own and is known of them, for whom He laid down His life that they might live through Him. We believe in Him and

love Him, because His truth refreshes, comforts, cheers, and consoles us; for it teaches us that there is a God, a Creator, a Preserver, and Ruler, and an eternal Judge of the world, and an eternal home of happiness and bliss.

We have seen, then, that reason and faith are not opposed to each other, but that each has its appropriate sphere, and that they oppose each other only when a corrupt heart undertakes to model them according to its desires. Let it be remembered,

III. *That reason should not presume to sit in judgment on matters of faith.*

Faith, as has been shown, possesses an internal evidence, which exists only for him who has faith. We cannot prove anything, unless we have its spirit; we cannot judge of a thing unless we have a measure by which to value it; and how should reason, unacquainted with this internal evidence, with the only way of proving faith, be able to judge of it? To call this internal evidence our own, we must have *experienced* it, and before we have done so, we have *no right* to reason on it. Every *right* presupposes the fulfilment of a *duty*, and none can morally enjoy the former without performing the latter. I have a right to live only, if I perform the duty of preserving the life and health of my body, and respecting the rights of my fellow-men. He

who claims the right of judging of faith, must have performed the duty of having made himself acquainted with its spirit, its nature and objects, else he will be like the blind man who judges of color, or like the deaf man who speaks of the sounds of music. Whenever reason presumes to judge without having experienced faith, it universally leads to doubting. For it is the nature of reason to doubt what it cannot understand, and to ridicule it.

But neither scepticism nor ridicule was ever able to injure the Christian religion. Scepticism cannot injure it, because it is too weak in itself, and religion too strong. The sceptic says: *We can know nothing*; but in saying so he contradicts himself; for if it is certain that *we can know nothing*, we must know this at least to be a fact, and consequently we know something. And this very knowledge is saving knowledge; it is the beginning of all wisdom. The sceptic says: "We cannot attain to any truth;" but this that we cannot attain to any truth, he admits to be truth, and consequently contradicts himself. If he would listen to this contradiction, if he would apply his rule, to doubt everything concerning religion, to his own doubts also, he would soon free himself from this vulture that preys on his vitals. The truly consistent sceptic, who doubts, not because he desires that there may be no religion, but because he cannot conscientiously admit a criterion of truth, ought not to open his lips; for whatever he may utter, will in

some way contradict the assertions, which he takes for granted and on which he reasons.

It is still worse when reason becomes so perverted as to scoff at the truth of religion. Shaftesbury says : If any religious doctrine can be exposed to ridicule, it must certainly contain a falsehood. Wit, it cannot be denied, is a dangerous enemy to religion. Where it exists, deep and serious meditation is always absent. We wish to reflect on a subject, but a witty thought presents itself and renders it ridiculous, then we are done with it ; instead of meditating on it, we laugh at it. Lucian wielded all the weapons of sarcasm and wit against the Greek superstition very skilfully, and many have attacked the Christian religion with similar weapons. But whilst Lucian succeeded, they have failed ; the caustic rays of their wit have reflected back upon themselves, like arrows upon the breast of the archer. The reason is manifest. True wit must always stand far above that on which it pours its shafts. Now, he that would expose the Christian religion to ridicule, must stand above and beyond divine wisdom. Hence none of those who have attempted to destroy the confidence of Christians by ridiculing their doctrines, have succeeded. They may have scoffed at their own notions of these doctrines, but the doctrines themselves, the truth contained in them, their wit could not reach. Their sarcasm almost universally recoiled upon themselves, and the proverb could be applied :

He that laughs last, laughs best. Hobbes—to give an instance or two—during the day ridiculed the idea that there is a God, but when night came he was so much afraid of ghosts that he dared not sleep alone. A celebrated physician, who frequently laughed at the doctrine of the soul and its immortality, when lying sick of the gout, employed a conjuror to exorcise the demons from his limbs.

IV. Finally, let me show in a few words, *that reason and faith mutually support and advance each other.*

The contents of faith are, on the one hand, the sin of man, and, on the other, his redemption from it, and eternal salvation through Jesus Christ. That all men are fallen and suffer under the curse of hereditary sin, has always been admitted. It has been the theme of Poetry; the most beautiful productions of human imagination, the poems of Dante, of Tetrarch, Milton, and Klopstock, are full of it. This being admitted on all sides, it is but reasonable to believe that He, who would redeem the world from sin, must be free from sin Himself; that the pure cannot proceed from the impure; and that Christ consequently must come from Heaven. So it is likewise reasonable, that He, who would give life to the dead, must have life everlasting in Himself; that that life must be His by whom are created heaven and earth, the Visible and Invisible, Thrones and Principalities and Powers, by

whom and for whom all is created, who is above all and in all. The Saviour of the world, it was reasonable to expect, would be the Son of God; the Son of God alone could be the Saviour of the world. In short, reason cannot but acknowledge that when man has fallen into a snare, he needs one, not enticed by its allurements, to extricate him; that when the inward monitor sleeps, we need one who never sleeps and will awaken us—who will help us to a clear idea of our dangerous situation—who will show us how far inimical powers have led us from the right path, and who will guide us back to it again. When man no longer understands himself, he needs an interpreter of his own language. When man has lost God in his heart, he needs one that visibly represents Him anew. We need the Son of God, who stands before us as a kind and loving brother—who by His Spirit becomes our guide, by His holiness our model, and by His love in life and in death the object of our supreme affection.

On the other hand, faith assists reason. Reason left to itself is arrogant, is acted upon by impure motives, is selfish and contracted. Nourished by the senses and wholly depraved, it is inclined to consider the sensual world the only world. But by the Spirit of God reason is regenerated; by faith its views are purified and enlarged and extended beyond the grave; by faith its longing for immortality is satisfied and man's final destination is revealed to it. (Plato, the wisest of ancient phi-

losophers desired and longed for the time, when one wiser than all men would reveal the truth fully.) Faith points out the only worthy aim for the efforts of reason ; gives a peace, which the world knows not, and in which alone man can find true happiness in life and consolation in the hour of death.

In conclusion, I desire to make a few practical remarks.

1. And here I would say that, as faith is the only true source of all virtue, unbelief is the fountain of all sin—its seat and root. Without faith we cannot please God ; without faith there can be no wisdom, nor justice, nor holiness, nor redemption ; without faith there is no love, no faithfulness, no courage, no consolation in our hearts. Without faith the will remains weak, sensuality strong, reason depraved, life vain, the grave awful. Hence it is that infidelity is the most terrible word contained in our language, and to be charged with it can be but illy brooked by any one.

But no one has faith, except the believer in Christ. Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ ? for He is the true God and eternal life ! The Scriptures give witness of Him and contain the Truth ; the Spirit, that proceeds from Him, is the Spirit of Truth ; and the Church established by Him renders this Truth manifest. He who pays no regard to the Scriptures, to the Spirit of Truth, and to the ordinances of the Church,

does not believe ; he lives without faith and Truth, in the world of wickedness and falsehood.

2. None can enter the sphere of faith by a mere resolution of the will, or by merely taking a proper view of the contents of faith. Faith is the bloom of regeneration, and salvation the fruit of faith. Unless we are regenerated, we have no faith. But regeneration does not merely direct reason to different objects, or correct the defects of the will, or mend our moral life : it is a new principle in man, which changes *him*, and not only *something in him* ; which makes him a new creature, and not only remodels some parts in him or revives some of his powers. The regenerated person knows what Truth is, because he is of the Truth ; he knows by whom he is called, for the Spirit in him will tell him ; he knows the voice of Christ, because he listens for it—loves it.

THE COMMUNION OF THE INNER LIFE.

MATT. 28 : 20.

“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

THROUGHOUT the sacred Scriptures we can trace a deep view touching the connection between the visible and the invisible world. Every organization, every natural phenomenon, is represented as the effect of a spiritual, an invisible cause, and the visible world as the antitype of the invisible, which is the prototype. Between these two worlds there exists a constant intercourse. Both affect each other mutually. Angels come down from heaven and appear to men, both when sleeping and waking; even the Lord Himself visited His holy ones, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Paul. Throughout all ages we find this communication of Heaven with earth; but since Christ, the centre both of the visible and invisible world, descended with the fulness of revelation, on whom angels came down *from* heaven and from whom angels rose up *to* heaven, the celestial regions have been open in a higher sense, and will be open forever, to the spiritual eye of the Christian. He sees the earth filled with the Spirit of God; he sees a stream of divine power constantly pervading the universe;

and every truth in him, every good motive, comes, as he believes, from the Saviour, without whom he does nothing, without whom he knows nothing. This view is, indeed, the most natural and most reasonable. When we look around us upon the world, the mind investigating the nature of all things, ascends from cause to cause till finally it comes to a point, beyond which it cannot go, to a cause, which cannot be traced back to another, which must be the original cause of all causes, the origin of all powers, the fountain of life. This cause no longer belongs to that which is visible; and as little as life can proceed from death, spirit from matter, so little can it be comprised within the bounds of nature. It comes from, it belongs to, the invisible world. Reasonable as this view is, there have been those, who have denied the existence of an invisible world, have declared it to be the product of fancy and imagination, maintaining that all is matter, and that besides it there is nothing. My theme to-day will therefore be—

The connection existing between the Visible and Invisible, between Christ who is in heaven and His Church that is on earth.

In sketching this theme, I am well aware that the words of my text were originally addressed to the teachers of the Gospel; yet I have the authority of many commentators in my favor, when I give them a more general application.

In proving that the visible and the invisible world, Christ and all His followers on earth, are closely connected with each other, I shall show

I. *That this connection does not exist for the senses nor for the sensual man.*—All of us have heard the sceptic say, “if there were a visible connection between *this* world and the *other*, if spirits could come down from heaven and communicate heavenly things to us, we would believe. We would believe in the immortality of the soul, had we seen one of our departed friends return, and bring us news from those dark regions; we would believe in Christ were He with us as He was with His disciples, who saw His miracles, and heard His words.” The connection they desire is evidently one for the senses, not for the mind, as if the knowledge we acquire through the medium of the senses, were more certain than that which the intercourse of spirit with spirit can afford us—as if we had but one fountain of knowledge, our sensual nature, and not also another, an invisible one, mind, both of which deserve at least equal credit, since they give us equal truth.

But let us look away from this aspect of the subject; let us ask: *Is what the sceptic demands possible?*—He is opposed to miracles, he questions their propriety, since according to his views they are a violation of sacred laws; he doubts their possibility. We will hold him to his own argument, and ask further: is what he demands possible without a *miracle*?—The invisible world is inhabited by

spirits. These live either with or without bodies. If they live without bodies, they cannot become visible; for how can spirits, that are without form and figure, be seen, when there are even some material substances, as air or ether, that cannot be perceived by the eye, in whose existence we nevertheless firmly believe? And as little as spirits could be visible to the eye, could their words be audible to the ear, for to speak to the senses they would need the organs of speech. If it were asserted, however, that spirits may inspire us with thoughts, which, perhaps, they do, how could the sceptic, without a miracle, distinguish those thoughts from his own? How could he who depends only on sensuous truth, know that the inspired truth is not the product of his own mind?

Suppose, on the other hand, that these spirits live with bodies. It would be equally impossible for them to become visible to our senses without a miracle. Their bodies would subject them to the same law of gravity that reigns over us; this law would fasten them to the planet on which they live, as it chains us to the earth; and as we cannot raise ourselves beyond the atmosphere of our dwelling-place, leave it and enter another, so they could not be expected to leave their habitation and come down to us.

Without a miracle then, we see, that what the infidel demands would be impossible; and if he refuses to believe in miracles, he ought to scorn a

request based on them. But let us admit for a moment, that spirits can appear to our senses from time to time, even after Christ, the Son of God, has dwelt among us. The question will then arise : What means have our senses to recognize them as heavenly beings ? to distinguish them from evil demons, who have the power to assume the form of angels of light, and whom the infernal regions might send to lead us astray, to delude us with empty hopes and vain expectations, to seduce us from the path of duty and truth, and plunge us into eternal ruin ? What means have our *senses* to ascertain, whether what these spirits would communicate is truth or falsehood ? Would he, who does not believe Moses and the Prophets, believe in such spirits ? Would he, who can see nothing in Christ but a man, a Jew ; he who hears only human words, but not the truth, which comes from Heaven, when Christ speaks to him ; would he place his confidence in the dead, if they should rise from the grave ? Would our senses be able to recognize an old acquaintance in the *dead* risen from the grave, or would there not be room for delusion and deception ? And suppose these spirits should visit us frequently, would we not, from custom and habit, become as indifferent to their information, as we now are to many sins, into which we run, though we have often seen all the evil consequences of indulgence ? as indifferent as we now are to the sight of ruined health, whilst

vice leads us directly and certainly to it? We see the misery, but do not shun it. The robber sees his companion executed, but continues on in the path of transgression. What then would be the use of such a sensuous connection between the visible and invisible world?

Whilst no advantage can be discovered, did such a connection exist, we may see the goodness of God in not having permitted it. For if it were possible, what the imagination of all ages has so beautifully represented, that the perfect spirits of higher regions could visit our earth and then return as apparitions of light through the ether into their habitations: what great confusion would this magic connection cause in the world? Would not every sudden flash of light, every unexpected motion of the air, every shadow in the dawn of evening, every imaginary figure of our dreams at midnight, excite our nerves and fill our breasts with fear and anxiety? Would not the desponding look constantly for apparitions, and forget that their duty is to live, to labor, and to be useful? Would such a connection not retard the current of our activity, transform the diligent man into an idle dreamer, dissolve the ties of society, and afford to every impostor the means of deception? The superstitious belief in a visible connection of this world with another, and in the apparitions of ghosts, has been great at all times; and there have always been some who were ready to enter into a league

with that dark and mysterious region, to conjure its inhabitants by secret arts, and charge them to assist their evil designs, their desire for riches and power. There have been others, from time to time, ever since the resurrection of Christ, who have pretended to be the sons of God, or to be favored with a peculiar inspiration, and to bring new messages from heaven. Considering all this, we must say, it is well that no sensuous connection exists between the Visible and the Invisible, between Christ and His followers.

II. In the second place, I shall prove in a few words, *that the connection between Christ and His children, between the Visible and the Invisible, does not exist for reason.*

Though it is true, that we are surrounded by, live and breathe in, the invisible world, that all we can see, rests in it as in its original ground, that millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth, both when we wake and when we sleep, and that all these creatures and invisible powers come from Christ and bear witness of Him,—yet human reason, relying on itself, cannot see what the childlike mind of the believer clearly comprehends. There is no power in us, that can give us any certain knowledge concerning the higher regions and their inmates; no effort of mind, no ecstasy of feeling, no flight of imagination, can raise us into communion with the spirits of Heaven. Reason in

its *natural* state is confined to such truth as we may learn from experience, and from the observation of the natural world ; but even here the highest degree of intellectual activity, is not able to comprehend even one half of the invisible powers of nature.

We see this visible world undergo constant changes ; we see the plants grow, bloom, ripen their seeds, and decay ; and from these external changes we conclude upon internal causes ; but what power is contained in these causes, what power *is*, what it is from,—these questions, though they pertain to the height of knowledge, we cannot solve. We see particles of matter inclining towards one centre, and call this the effect of the law of gravity ; we see all planets move with great regularity around their respective suns, and all suns revolve on their axes ; we see the seasons on our globe, and weeks and days and hours, return in regular succession : but that power which moves the starry heavens and brings us the seasons, is, in the midst of all its visible effects, invisible to reason. And to speak of ourselves ; we see the arm perform an action, but the will, under whose control it acts, the understanding that plans and designs,—who has ever succeeded in tracing them back to some visible cause in nature, or in establishing a complete knowledge of their origin ! The power of thinking, that, with the swiftness of lightning, forces many ideas under one general head ; the

conscience, which urges us to resist all the allurements of matter, and to exercise an unlimited sway over all that is merely sensual; the divine ability, to determine all our actions and to govern all our inclinations,—who has comprehended their connection with the body? Who knows with perfect certainty their mode of existence?

It is beyond doubt that reason, though surrounded by the invisible world, cannot comprehend it; it is equally beyond doubt, that though Christ is with every one of us, speaks to every one of us, protects every one of us, reason does not see Him, nor hear Him, nor perceive Him. And how can it be otherwise? What does it avail, if Christ speaks to the sinner by his conscience, and he is unwilling to recognize the voice of the Lord? What does it avail, if the Lord approaches the sinner, now by the admonitions of friends, then by warnings coming from a stranger, if he is unwilling to believe that it is the Lord who speaks through men to him? What does it avail, if the Lord, by the beauties of nature, softens the heart of the sinner and fills it with a heavenly joy, if he is unwilling to see the Lord in every brook, in every torrent, in the stars of heaven, and in all that is lovely on earth? Though the Lord chastise men with misfortunes, or lead them through wonderful paths to unexpected happiness; though He bless their labors with signal success, or raise them to the heights of fortune;—yet if they do not in all things seek Him, in whom they live and move

and have their being, all will be in vain. Though the Lord be with them in His love, they will see nothing but natural occurrences in all they meet with. Even the Bible, if they do not believe that the Lord speaks in it, even the Bible, the book of love and harmony, will become a source of discussions and disputations. Let them listen to sermons, and if they are not convinced that all truth is the Lord's and comes from Him, they will only listen either to censure or applaud the speaker.

III. Whilst the words of Christ, therefore : Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world, do not apply to sinners, they are a source of joy and consolation to Christians. Christ is present, not visibly to the bodily eye, nor to the natural understanding, but He is with us through faith and in the Spirit.

He is with us, when we perceive an important truth, when we indulge a serious meditation, when we give ear to the voice of conscience, when our feelings are softened, when we shrink from sinning, or when our hearts glow with uncommon zeal for the work of God. It is the Lord that speaks to us through a book, that edifies us through a friend, that gives us advice through the word of a stranger, that attracts our attention and influences the current of our thoughts through the innocence of a child, whose simplicity puts our wisdom to confusion, whose cheerfulness beguiles us of our melan-

choly, and whose peace and tranquillity unlock to us the paradise of those that believe and do not doubt. The Lord approaches our hearts by wants and by blessings, by days of joy and by nights of sorrow, by meetings and by separations, by the small occurrences of the family, and by the fate of nations. Whithersoever we go, there the Lord is, and we cannot be without Him. We see Him in the constitution of our government, in the spirit of our laws, in the morals of society, in the institutions of learning, in all the views, principles, and sacred undertakings of our age. As we are surrounded by the air of heaven, so are believers surrounded on all sides visibly and invisibly by the Spirit of the Lord. No journey is necessary to be with Him, no money to be admitted into His presence, no splendid dress to walk by His side: wherever we may be, if we have eyes to perceive Him, and ears to hear Him, a heart to love Him, and a desire to meet Him, there He is with us. Every act of devotion in the temple of God, every feeling of delight that trembles in the bosom at His holy altar, every ray of light that sinks from the Bible into the heart, every sermon that entreats us to repent and accept of the salvation offered by Christ; whatever speaks to us in nature—sunset and sunrise, spring by its new creations, summer by its sheaves, autumn by its ripened fruits, and winter by its tranquillity and repose—all tell us, that the Lord is near us. What is all the know-

ledge of the earth, all the wisdom of reason, compared with the conviction, that the Lord is with us !

He is with us in our wants and in our need. We are better than the fowls of the air or the flowers of the field ; we need more than meat and drink ; we have wants which neither nature nor reason can satisfy ; hence the Lord came down from His heavenly glory and became a servant and died for us, in order that we might see in His light, fight against sin in His strength, rest in His peace, be purified by His blood, and be happy forever in the mansions which He has prepared for us. He that is with us in all need, knows and will give us also what best corresponds with our disposition, what will most powerfully awaken us, what will give us the fullest satisfaction, what will most securely save us, and what will most effectually try our faith and sanctify our hearts. Whether we need encouragement or humiliation, consolation or chastisement, wounds or balm, long life or an early death ; whether He must approach us gently, lest He should break the tender reed or quench the smoking flax, or must smite our rocky hearts with a rod that the fountain of living water may spring up : all is known to Him who is with us and does all for us.

Again : *The Lord is with us in all we do or undertake.* He perceives clearly the relations in which we live and the manner in which we use them. To Him the agreement of our will with His is manifest, as well as our opposition to it. Before we

open the mouth He knows what we will speak; before we have determined upon an action He is acquainted with what we will do. - No delusion, no hypocrisy deceives Him: as fire tries silver, and the furnace gold, so He distinguishes pure from selfish motives—truth from hypocrisy. Whether we sit in the shade of a fig-tree praying, like Nathaniel, or at the receipt of custom, like the son of Alpheus, or on the shore of the sea casting nets, like the brothers of Bethsaida; whether we are engaged in devotion at the grave of a departed friend, or dissipate our hours at the table of mirth; He sees us, He knows us, He tries us, for He is with us. The darkest recess of character, the most concealed fold of our being, the softest emotion of the heart, lies open before Him, and He will judge all of them. His holy eye rests on every one of us, and He will aid us according to our circumstances. When we are about to forget our duty, He will remind us of it by conscience; when the paths of inclination and duty cross each other, He will show us the right one; when times of tribulation come upon us, He will give us wisdom, perseverance, and patience; when we desire to be freed from the dominion of sin, He will take our guilt upon Himself. He who came into the world to save sinners, will never leave them nor forsake them.

If this conviction, that the Lord is with us in all our wants, in our business and occupations, is full

of consolation, it ought likewise to inspire us with *confidence*.

Let us therefore confide in Him without reserve. He knows what dignity has been bestowed upon His followers : will He not enable them to preserve it ? He knows the way that leads to Heaven : will He not guide our feet and keep us from falling ? He knows how sin cleaves to us and renders us negligent of His work : will He expect more of us than we can perform ? When we suffer from within and from without, let us trust in Him ; He will give us counsel, assistance, and consolation. The number of our days is in His hands, the limit of our life was written in His book before we had seen the light of this world ; and if we call on Him in the hour of death, He will support us and lead us through that way, where no mortal arm can any longer assist us ; He will lead us through the valley of the shadow of death to the regions of eternal life and glory. Let us confide in Him, though our actions be imperfect and though we be misunderstood by the world. He knows us : our disposition, our zeal, our motives, our real worth, our courage, our perseverance in His cause and our anxiety to accomplish what circumstances may render impossible, are acknowledged by Him even though concealed by a thick veil from the eye of man. Let us confide in Him, though we be misrepresented and suspected by men. Let us be cheerful and preserve our peace of mind, when the world is at war

with us, for He that is with us, will not forsake His holy ones ; He will not give those up to the power of the enemy and of sin, whom He has chosen and set apart from the world.

If we do thus confide in Him, with what joy, with what hope, may we look for the day when He shall judge the world in righteousness ! Will not He whom we confess before the world, confess us also before His Heavenly Father ? Will He not recognize His own in the midst of the crowd, and gather them to Himself ? Will He forget His word, so rich in peace : “ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they behold My glory, which thou hast given Me ! ” Men may err and be deceived ; if we confide in them our fate is dubious, our safety uncertain : but in His hands our salvation is sure, for He never changes and never errs.

Therefore trust in the Lord, for He takes pleasure in those that fear Him, and hope in His mercy.

THE NURTURE OF THE INNER LIFE.

COL. 3 : 15-17.

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

LORD, our Heavenly Father ! Thou hast created all things that are, and Thou art the Benefactor and Preserver of our race. Our highest happiness is to know Thee, to love Thee, to obey Thee. This alone raises us above the brute ; this alone spreads light and joy around us. Knowing Thee, we know the source of all that is good, and true, and noble. Loving Thee, we love the fountain of all that is worthy of our affection and deserving of our regard. Obeying Thee, we ennoble our will and character, and receive the best and wisest of all into our hearts. Grant therefore, O Lord, that we may know, and love, and obey Thee.

Our time, O Lord ! is short, but the end of all

our endeavors, and the destination of our existence is to know Thee and Jesus Christ, the Saviour, whom Thou hast sent. We live here in a state of probation. It is Thy will, that in this state we make the wisest use of all our faculties and gifts; that we cultivate and employ them in a manner which will result in our own welfare and in the welfare of our fellow-men. Thou hast connected us in different ways with each other, and commanded us to live for each other, and to take a mutual interest in each other's temporal and eternal happiness. This duty Thou hast especially imposed upon parents and children, teachers and pupils. We have set this day apart, to remember this duty, and have come together to pray, that Thy Spirit may rest on all the Literary Institutions of our country. May Thy Word dwell richly in them, and may whatever they do in word or deed, be done in the name of Jesus. May teachers and scholars be of one mind. May all desire the spread of genuine piety. May they teach and admonish each other in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs—singing with grace in their hearts. Grant, O Lord! that our Literary Institutions may be the nurseries of godliness, and that the youth intrusted to them may be trained in the ways of holiness.

May Thy blessing especially rest on the Institution with which we are connected. Bless teachers and scholars; visit them with Thy reviving Spirit; and may all, going forth from it, take with

them the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

There are four great institutions that are intended for the spread of the Gospel of Christ ; the Family, the Government, the Church, and the School. At all times, and in all ages, the Government has rested on the Family ; the character of the latter has been that of the former. The degree of liberty enjoyed in the family, was also enjoyed by every citizen. If the family spirit of a nation was despotic, despotism was the form of the Government. So closely are families and the whole Government connected, that as every individual constitutes an integral part of the family to which he belongs, so are all families members of one great Family, the nation. This connection between these two institutions, which have at all times been considered of divine origin, is generally acknowledged ; but less so, on the one hand, the relation of the School and the Church to each other, and, on the other, the influence of both upon the state of civil society. Some think, that education, independent of religion, and consequently of the Christian Church, would be sufficient to uphold order and civil liberty ; others place all their confidence in the prudence and wisdom of Lawgivers, and deem even the most common education unnecessary. Christians thought differently on this subject even in the earliest periods of Christianity. As the Saviour had not overlooked

children, but had said : “ Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven ;” so the first Christians very soon thought of training the youth ; and established schools, whose object it was to instruct them in eternal truth. In early times, already, there was a school at Alexandria, in which teachers were educated for common schools. Thus, we perceive the great care which was bestowed upon the Christian Education of youth. And this same care has exhibited itself, whenever, after a state of slumber, the Church has again awoke to a due sense of her obligations. The Reformers, especially Martin Luther, turned the attention of the people to the then deplorable state of the schools, wrote Catechisms for them, visited them, and insisted on having the Bible, Catechism, and Hymnbook well studied, portions of them learned by heart, and others explained. In Germany, the subjects of instruction, and the order in which they are taken up, are regulated, even now, by the plan adopted at the time of the Reformation. The school commences with singing a hymn ; then prayers are offered by some of the scholars ; then some chapters are read from the Bible, and afterwards explained, and such passages marked as the teacher desires the scholars to commit to memory ; then the portion of the Catechism pointed out for the day is recited, and, after these religious exercises have been attended to, arithmetic, geography, and history

come in their regular turn. The object of all instruction was and is, with them, to train up the youth to be pious and godly, honoring their Creator, preserving virtue and righteousness in their lives.

And what is more natural, than that in everything which is great, we should turn our attention directly to the youth, the tender object of our love and care? There is an infallible criterion, by which we may distinguish the noble and good from the merely great, or from that which historically and in the eye of the world, makes an epoch. This criterion is the following. Those who, filled with the spirit of something good, desire its preservation, are at all times the friends of youth, and place their hopes and wishes upon them. But the heroes of worldly history are satisfied with the co-operation of their contemporaries. The revival of internal life needs the youth as its soil; revolutions and other heroic actions can do without it.

This has been felt too, in its full extent, by all the good and noble citizens of our country. They have unanimously agreed on setting this day apart, to pray for revivals of religion in colleges, and in doing this they deserve our highest regard. For if common schools have at all times been the objects of Christian solicitude, how much more ought those institutions to claim the prayers of all the pious, that must furnish the community with its physicians and lawyers, with its teachers and ministers, and with the heirs of all its knowledge and wisdom?

I invite your attention to-day to a few remarks, which I shall make on the words we find in the Epistle to the Colossians, in the 3d chapter, from the 15th to the 17th verses.

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”

Though these words were originally addressed to Christians in their relation to each other, they apply equally well to Christians in their relation to the youth committed to their care ; and in the latter respect only I shall make them the subject of a short lecture.

I. The purpose which a school may have immediately in view, and by which it may distinguish itself from other schools, may be a very specific one, and subservient to some end in common life. There are many wants, and many occupations to meet these wants ; there are many gifts and talents that qualify different persons for different employments. These different talents and inclinations ought all of them to be cultivated, and particular schools ought to be adapted to these specific ends. But no schools have any permanent value, unless while each differs from the other by its specific object, all live in one spirit ; and unless all these specific objects are subordinate to one great end, to

that of introducing *the peace of God into the hearts of our youth*. What is human knowledge worth without the peace of God! What is the possession of all wisdom and of all the riches of the earth worth without salvation after death? This then is the great end of all schools, and of colleges especially, that we lead our youth to the source from which the peace of God flows richly and purely; that we teach them and entreat them to receive this peace into their hearts, and have it reign in them. In this aim all schools ought to be united; as a single and invisible thread unites a great number of beautiful and variegated flowers into one garland, so this spirit of the peace of God and this common end ought so to unite institutions of learning, that while many as to number and purposes, they nevertheless may be one as to spirit and final end.

From this view it follows, that a school, which has only the acquisition of bread, the future support of its scholars, in view, is wholly unworthy of the patronage of Christians, and unworthy of a noble and free community. There are schools even in Christian communities, that teach many things; that teach us how to converse with our fellow-men, how to carry on our business, how to treat those with whom we have intercourse, and how to turn every production of the earth to our advantage. In such schools many books are read and become endeared to the scholars; but while all are read,

one only is excluded,—the Bible. It is not read, not quoted, not even alluded to. All instruction must of course be in accordance with this principle. While everything in space and in time is spoken of, that which is beyond space and time, eternity, is never thought of. Faith, faith in a Saviour; holiness, sanctification, repentance, and salvation, are words never heard. The omission of such topics in a school is heathenish, and must be deprecated. Our great and principal aim must always be the one mentioned: that we may introduce the peace of God into the hearts of our youth.

II. But *how* shall we lead those to the Source of peace, who by nature are the enemies of God? *Peace* and *war* cannot be united; the one excludes the other. It is in vain for man to say to the raging storm, Be silent! or to the agitated wave of the ocean, Sink and be smooth! or to the passions of man, Be composed!—While there is no power left to man, by which to cause the peace of God to descend upon him and bless him, the Apostle nevertheless admonishes us to be thankful; for

1. We have a Prince of peace, by whose power and love, by whose death and resurrection, peace between God and man, is restored—by whose mere word the power of demons is banished from our hearts, and the love of God takes possession of them. Hence let us be thankful; and let whatever we do or say, be done and said in the name of

Christ; let His name be often pronounced in the ears of our youth; let it be urged upon them as the only one in which there is salvation in heaven, and peace for a disturbed and terrified conscience.

2. But let us be thankful for another reason, closely connected with the above. Let us be thankful for the spirit of Christianity, which, after it gave us a Saviour, the Gospel, and the Church, likewise instituted schools, and thus made it possible to pronounce the name of the Saviour daily in the hearing of those whose consciences have not yet become callous. There were indeed schools before the introduction of the Christian religion, but they were either of an elementary character, or had a particular rank of citizens in view, or were a private undertaking of doubtful existence. The ancient Hebrew has even no name for schools of children, and much less can it have had the thing itself. There were schools for prophets, and Rabbins, as among the Jews; schools for priests, as among the Egyptians and Indians; schools for kings, as among the Persians; schools for philosophers, as among the Greeks; schools for orators, as among the Romans. But Christianity has brought about a change. Not only certain gifts and talents are considered worthy of the care and attention of Christians, but all without any exceptions. Every talent and qualification is the gift of God, and, as such, must be drawn out and cultivated. Hence as different as these talents are, as different become the

forms of schools ; and whatever the employment is to which any one happens to be inclined, there is a school he may enter, calculated to prepare him for it. There are the schools for infants, in which the tender lips of our race are already taught to pronounce the name of the Saviour, to pray and to sing. There are afterwards the schools for languages, arts, economy, mercantile schools, military schools, up to gymnasiums, lyceums, colleges, universities, and academies of science. Who, casting a glance upon this well-organized system of schools, proceeding from a Christian regard for every talent of man and every employment in life, would not feel thankful, especially when he may believe, that in all these schools, from the lowest to the highest, the person of Christ is taught as the source of the peace of God, which passeth all understanding?

3. Colleges ought to be thankful for the superior advantages they enjoy in disciplining the faculties of the mind, in cultivating the heart, in forming the character, and in refining the taste. It is with thoughts, as with many other things, that are not matured and do not become perfect until they have passed through a great many hands. Thoughts and sciences do not ripen in the same mind or nation, in which they first originated, but require time and many different efforts to be drawn out and to be brought to maturity. The ancients could not base their literature and knowledge as we do, upon past experience; the Greeks had no Oriental poetry

nor philosophy, no Oriental works on natural science, which they could use as models, and which they had only to render more perfect. We, on the other hand, see the inexhaustible riches of the Greek genius spread before us in the most beautiful form; we may only sit down at the table, laden so plentifully, and enjoy ourselves. Should we not be thankful that Divine Providence has preserved to us a Homer and Plato, a Xenophon, a Thucydides and Plutarch, an Aristotle and Tacitus? Every word these men spoke was given in its most classical form, and not written for the day, but for an eternity. Reading them in the proper spirit, we may learn how to communicate golden fruits in silver capsules, and thus accustom ourselves to correct and beautiful thinking. Yet in being thankful for these books and advantages, we must not forget that they are only valuable, when the light of *The Book* is shed upon them; when, while admiring their beauties, we are at the same time enabled by it to preserve ourselves free from their errors and superstition.

III. When thus we lead our youth to the peace of God, and give the Bible a place above all other books; when we invite Christ to reside among us, and when He speaks by the lips of the teachers and opens the hearts and ears of the scholars, then we shall be united "in one body," as our text says. Then there will be no ambition on the part of teach-

ers, no envy and jealousy among scholars; then none will desire to communicate his own views, but the truth as it is in Christ; none will insist on his own narrow and contracted ideas, but every one will be willing to receive instruction as well as to give it. For the spirit of love will animate all, scholars and teachers; they will live together like brethren; they will cherish each other, and be mild and forgiving; they will aid and assist each other in everything, but especially in the attainment of salvation; they will be of one mind and one spirit; they will be united in one body.

IV. But our text says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Here let us mark the little word *all*. No science is to be excluded from the Word of God; no science is unfit to receive it, as no sinner is so great that he can not be blessed by it. Every science then may become its vessel; every one may be penetrated by it. Whether it is Homer we read, or Pindar; whether we study history, and its convincing evidences of a divine plan and providence, or the science of nature, which exhibits the Divine Will in every law; everywhere, Paul says, let the Divine Word dwell richly. But where it dwells, there the spirit of love must reign, and that of denunciation must flee. Not then does the Divine Word dwell in worldly wisdom, when we denounce it, when we abuse and condemn it; how could it dwell in that which we

try to destroy? but when we raise the worldly science by the spirit of Christ; when we free it from its worldly tendency, and connect it with the things of eternity. For every science has a truth, and every real truth must be capable of entering the eternal truth.

From this passage of our text we may remark :

1. That Paul does not favor the notion of those that think it sufficient to have separate hours for religious exercises, for the reading and the explaining of the Gospel, but he insists on having the Word of Christ dwell richly in all our wisdom. As the Spirit of God wrought in the prophets, and breathed in the harp of David, as it built the temple of Solomon and spake judgment by the mouth of Debora, so the book of Christ is to reign with its spirit and truth in every human book, so the Spirit of God is to breathe life and energy into all our wisdom, and thus connect everywhere the earthly and the heavenly, sanctifying the former by the latter.

2. We remark that in reading the classics, those works of varied talents and deep, untiring study, we ought not to do as those who consider them the only oracles of truth, and recommend every word and sentiment, just because Pliny or Cicero uttered them. Such views wrong the Book of all books, and misunderstand its value, which is as much greater than that of every other, as the wisdom of God is higher than that of man. However we may admire the wisdom of a Plato or of an Aristotle, we

will feel it on every page we read, that they sought indeed perseveringly, but in vain, for that truth which is now accessible even to the understanding of children. Hence we ought to cause the light of the Gospel to fall upon them.

3. Neither ought we in reading the classics to follow those, who treat these great and noble works, these models of pure style and correct thinking, these unequalled specimens of oratory, poetry, history, and philosophy—as if they were the works of schoolboys ; who seem to read them only for the purpose of exhibiting their own superior wisdom, of showing how much wiser they are than the authors, which they explain. It is always easy to sit in judgment on a work and condemn it, and to do so is gratifying to man ; for he would rather annihilate what goes beyond his own capacity, than acknowledge its superiority ; it is more difficult to understand a superior work ; and it is the most difficult of all to write one that is equal to it or better. When therefore a Christian, with the Bible in his hand, guided by revelation, which is given him without his merit ; when a Christian thus furnished with means, scorns the works of noble heathen, ridicules or condemns them, it is as absurd, as if a full-grown man, well acquainted by long use with a machine, laughs at another, because he cannot find the invisible spring, so well known to him, which when touched sets the whole work in motion. What can be more ridiculous than that a serious

man should quarrel with Plato, because he is not a Christian? The works of Greece stand unparalleled until now; no modern nation has a Demosthenes, or a Homer, a Sophocles or a Pindar, as regards beauty of expression and style, or richness and energy of thought. If we have not been able to reach their high position in these respects, it illy becomes us to treat them as if they were far below us, while we are perhaps not able to understand them fully, much less to write as they did.

Let us therefore neither overvalue nor undervalue them, but read them with the Gospel in our hands, and suffer the light of the latter to fall upon the dark portions of those ancient writers. Then we will acknowledge the good in them, and learn from them; and like the bee, that instinctively finds its suitable nourishment, we shall be able to appropriate all wisdom, thus sanctified by the Divine Word, richly dwelling in it, and to exclude whatever is erroneous.

V. And *what* will be the fruits of learned schools, that thus have the Word of Christ dwelling in them richly in all wisdom?

The text contains the answer. Those educated in them, "will teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts. And whatsoever they do in word or deed, they will do all in the name of the Lord Jesus!"

They will then, in the first place, teach and admonish each other ; they will become their own leaders ; they will continue, what they have begun, and enter the Church of Christ, either as ministers or as useful lay-members. Their minds will grow strong, and their knowledge be solid ; for their studies will be carried on from a sense of duty, and not merely according to goodwill and pleasure. They will, in the second place, cultivate their hearts and prepare them to receive truth ; for he who loves Christ, will love what is good and true and beautiful, wherever he may meet with it. They will sing therefore with grace in their hearts ; their songs will be psalms and hymns and spiritual songs ; and these will be but the expression of the harmony and peace felt in their hearts. But when the understanding and heart are rightly cultivated, the state will also receive citizens, that do, whatever they do, in the name of Jesus and in the fear of God. What is it that the citizen needs more than anything else ? Whether he has to sit in the council of kings or to arrange the concerns of a farm ; whether as a minister he has to satisfy the spiritual wants of a congregation, or as a teacher to lead to knowledge and virtue, he needs the fear of God above all things and the courage of a manly disposition. Whilst knowledge exhibits to us the good and the right, firmness and moral courage enable us to do what is right. Whether our own advantage try to influence us, or predilection, or

prejudice, or respect for favor, honor, or promotion, or fear, yet a firm and resolute disposition, that fears God and loves Christ, can not be bribed. A willingness to obey the laws of the country, an attachment to the constitution, which protects and defends their rights and lives, love for the country in which they live, and a readiness to sacrifice their own lives for the welfare of the commonwealth in the hour of danger,—distinguishes those who have learned to live in Christ, and to do all they do in His name. Such a moral disposition, such a firmness, such an unwavering courage, is the fruit of religion, of the fear of God, and the love of Christ.

Yet schools, training up the youth in the fear of the Lord, do not only educate valuable citizens for the state, but citizens too of the kingdom of Christ. Heaven will claim them as well as earth!

In applying the words of the text to ourselves, we may all learn a useful lesson. For if the Word of God is to dwell in all our wisdom, its spirit ought not only to fill and penetrate our teaching and instruction, but all our rules and arrangements, all our affections and discipline, all our admonition and advice. Colleges themselves ought to be regarded as the field for the operations of the Holy Spirit of God, and as the sacred seats of sanctified wisdom and knowledge. If the Word of God is to dwell richly in all wisdom, then all subjects taught in them are holy, and ought to be attended to

with regard and reverence. If the Word of God is to exhibit its power in all our actions, then Teachers and Students ought to love each other, and their intercourse ought to be marked by Christian dignity, by respect for and tender interest in each other. No offence can be greater in their intercourse, than one offered to the regard which Scholars owe to Teachers and Teachers to Scholars, and fellow-students to each other. If any offence is to be severely animadverted upon, it is such an one. Such an offence darkens the bright hopes of a school, and is at the same time like a concealed poison, that undermines the character of him who gave it. An offence against the rules of the institution is next in odiousness. Every rule leads to order and regularity; without rules there must be confusion. He who does not love and regard rules in science, in morals, and in his whole conduct, will not love order, and he who does not love order will be superficial, negligent, and destitute of respect for himself in all his undertakings. Such persons are a burden to themselves and a curse to the school of which they are members. Let therefore the Word of God dwell richly in all wisdom and in all your actions; be conscientious, regular in the performance of your duties; and never forget that no one will regard you more than you see fit to regard yourselves.

But, in the second place, teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

That the Word of God may dwell richly in all wisdom, we must pray for the presence of His Spirit in our hearts. Prayer must, therefore, precede and accompany all our teaching and admonitions; prayer in private and in public, prayer out of season and in season. It is the principal means to secure to ourselves personal holiness; it is the principal means, too, to call the blessing of God down upon an institution. Next to prayer we ought to take a deep interest in each other, and especially the pious in those that are still out of Christ.

But this interest must be *genuine*. It ought not to flow forth merely from the consideration that duty demands it, but from a sanctified brotherly love. When we have to force ourselves to it, when it is the offspring of cool reflections, and when we cherish it as a matter of duty or as part of our occupation, it will effect nothing, or have an effect that is not desirable. But when it comes from the heart, then it will find its way to the heart.

This interest, moreover, ought to be associated with forbearance and kindness, with meekness and consideration. It should never become obtrusive, never presume that it can effect what it desires in others, consequently should not be offended, nor discouraged, nor dissatisfied, when it does not succeed. It begins in love and must end in love; it confesses that all depends on God, and hence in meeting with a disappointment, it ought to ascribe this likewise to the Ruler of the universe.

If, now, in this spirit of Christian love and with such views, I direct a word to you, my young friends, who are still out of Christ, believe me, that it is spoken from friendship, and from a true interest in your eternal welfare. Your opportunities for receiving the peace of God into your hearts are manifold; and if you reject it as often as it is offered to you, you must finally render yourselves wholly insensible to it. The peace of God is necessary for your comfort in life, it is more necessary still in the hour of death, and most necessary when you will have to stand before the bar of judgment. There is a God who sees and watches you, who knows and perceives all your actions and views and feelings. He is your Creator, He will be your Judge. His approbation is desirable, His peace worth more than much fine gold. He offers you His peace daily, hourly; He offers it to you in the youth of your lives. Do not despise His offers constantly, until He will no more repeat them, or until He calls you from time to eternity. Then it will be too late to get the peace of God; and without a guide to find the path that leads through the valley of death to the heaven of life, without consolation or hope, your eyes will close in deep night, and despair will hang around you and snatch from you every hope of peace. Be wise in time, and seek early for that which alone can render you happy in life and in death, in time and in eternity!

THE FRUITS OF THE INNER LIFE.

PHIL. 1 : 9-11.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

OUR Heavenly Father! We approach Thy throne, to adore and praise Thee. Thou art Light, but we are surrounded by darkness. Thou art love, but we are opposed to Thee, and hate each other. Thou art holy, but we are sinners, and there is nothing good in us. We beseech Thee, the source of all holiness, that, by the influences of Thy Holy Spirit, Thou wilt sanctify our hearts, purify our feelings, determine all our resolutions, and devote our will to Thy service, and glory, and honor.

We can perform no good deeds by our own power; we cannot obtain righteousness by our own merits, for we have none. But, believing in the death of Christ, and receiving His life by faith, and His sufferings in our stead, we may be justified through Thy eternal grace. Give us this faith and this righteousness!

Let the tree of our lives be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are in us through Christ Jesus; may we grow in knowledge, and approve all things that are more excellent; may our Lord dwell in us, for He can render him strong who is weak, He can make him rich who is poor in spirit, and him unconquerable who is surrounded by the snares and allurements of life.

We feel, O Lord! that all depends upon Thy blessing. Grant us this Thy holy blessing!

Bless the Church of Christ as far as it extends; protect it from dangers from within and from without; preserve its purity; let it grow in love, and let every temple become a seminary of the eternal truth.

Bless all missionary undertakings; grant that through them the time may be hastened, when all shall know Thee.

Bless all the Institutions devoted to Thy honor; bless the Sunday Schools; bless the Teachers engaged in them. Let the children come to Thee, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Let this country prosper. Sanctify its rulers, that they may honor Thee. Bless this town and neighborhood; grant that every one in it may be devoted to Thy name; that it may be their daily meat and drink to do Thy will. Be with this afflicted congregation, and whilst they are a flock without a shepherd, let each one feel, that Thou hast promised to be with Thy people always even unto the end of the world.—

Every plant or animal, as long as it lives, grows until it reaches the highest degree of perfection of which its nature is susceptible. This is the general law of all that is created, and it is but reasonable to look for a similar law in those who tread the path of light, following the steps of Him, who even in His earliest childhood taught the wisest and most learned of His time. It is but natural to expect that the older they grow in age, the wiser do they become in divine knowledge, the stronger in Christian love, the more ardent in their zeal for the cause of our Redeemer. And we may expect this the more, since whilst everything else on earth has a limit appointed to it, the growth of the Christian has no limit. In our earthly business and occupations we may frequently say, "It is finished," if not before the hour of death, at least in that hour. Then we shall have finished gathering riches; then our earthly cares and trials will be finished; then the pursuits of ambition will be at an end. But the Christian when dying must acknowledge that this life is but a state of probation, but the commencement of a work, which will extend throughout, and have consequences *for*, all eternity. Such a work ought indeed to arrest all our attention, to claim our interest before all others; ought to cause us, who are buried with Christ, to grow *daily* in that, in which we hope to live *eternally*. And yet how frequently do we find it otherwise! There are so-called Christians, that promised fairly in their

youth, but in more advanced age retain scarcely a dark remembrance of their knowledge, gathered in early years; there are others who seemed to have received a warm and lasting impression, but their earthly cares and worldly desires have effaced it; others whose fondness for pleasure grows whilst the vigor of their body declines—others who daily withdraw themselves more and more from the softening influences of benevolence and love, fill their breast with envy, distrust, avarice, and selfishness, whilst their gray heads are bending ripe for their graves.

Paul, in addressing the congregation at Philippi, assures them that he prayed for them to his God that their love might abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that they might approve all things excellent and be filled with the fruits of righteousness. Paul neither advocated a faith, living only in the head, without affecting the life, whose principal object is knowledge and wisdom; nor a faith that has its root only in the heart; but prayed that by the grace of God the congregation at Philippi might possess that faith, which, as a new principle, would pervade equally all the faculties of their souls and all the affections of their hearts, which would sanctify all their desires and consecrate their whole lives to the service of the Lord; that they might grow in such faith, until their lives would be filled with the fruits of righteousness. The theme of my discourse will be derived from the 11th verse.

“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.” I shall show how *the life of the Christian is filled with these fruits*. In showing this, each word of the text demands a particular consideration.

1. And first of all, the term *righteousness*. A righteous man, according to the Old Testament, was one who, having fulfilled all the commandments, had by his own works and merits secured to himself the favor of God, and had a right to expect the promised reward. Yet no man could be considered righteous, unless he had fulfilled all the law, and was perfect as our Father in heaven. This being utterly impossible, inasmuch as, possessing a sinful nature, we either do the works of the flesh, of sin, and of darkness, or if our works agree *externally* with the law, our motives and internal disposition, which are the soul of our actions and determine their value, are still sinful and wanting in love, which alone produces what is good,—there is no righteousness to be obtained under the law and by works. Even Abraham was considered righteous only on account of his faith. Without a Mediator, without a Redeemer, we would be given to sin, and our fate would be eternal condemnation. Through our Saviour, however, another righteousness has been procured, which is diametrically opposed to the righteousness of the law. That righteousness being a gift of grace, is to be obtained only by faith in Christ.

Acknowledging our utter insufficiency, confessing our own unworthiness, and that we can have no merit of our own, resigning all that is ours, being poor in spirit and thirsting after righteousness, we must place our whole confidence in the death of Christ; we must, with a joyful and grateful hope in Him, yield our whole heart to Him, be buried with Him, rise with Him, die unto ourselves and the world and live only in Him, and thus receive that righteousness which the Saviour has purchased for us by His blood. The origin of this righteousness is God, the Mediator is Christ, he that receives it gratuitously is man, and the means by which he may partake of it is faith, and faith alone.

The differences between the righteousness under the old and that under the new dispensation, are striking; and in order that I may not be misunderstood in my assertions, I shall point out the principal one. Whilst the righteousness wrought under the law claimed a merit of its own, led to Pharisaical pride and hypocrisy, and demanded its reward as having a right to it; the righteousness by faith, being based on a profound sense of our own insufficiency and unworthiness, begins in humility, resigns all self-will, and prays that God will use all our powers and faculties, all our days and hours, all our relations and our whole life, to His glory; that He will determine our wills and sanctify our hearts, free us from selfishness, and do all in us that is necessary for our sanctification.

But this righteousness is not only based on humility, it receives all its *nourishment* also from it, and can prosper only by it. Knowing that reconciliation and justification have been brought about only through Christ Jesus, we dare not look for mercy unworthy of God, but we may place our hope on his grace in Christ. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." In the light of this grace we must feel our own wretchedness more deeply, repent of our sinfulness more heartily, look with more gratitude upon the blessings we have received, and perceive more clearly our dignity as Christians, more seriously our destination here on earth and hereafter in heaven.

Again: as humility is the commencement and the only nourishment of righteousness by faith, so it is also its principal *support*. Self-righteousness gives a dangerous feeling of security and safety; it does not see the danger of so many sensual impressions on our inner man; it does not avoid temptations to do evil, for it is proud and self-confident; it exposes itself to the allurements and snares which are laid here by a passion, there by a habit—here by a relation to men, there by a combination of circumstances—here by the business and clamor of the world, there by the silence of night—here by the ardent urgency of a mistaken zeal, and there even by the blessing of a good deed; for working

in its own strength, it attributes all success to itself, and not to Him from whom it comes. Righteousness, on the other hand, obtained by faith, is humble, knows its own weakness, and takes no steps without asking for the approval of Christ. It leads us to pray constantly that He would watch over our hearts, that He would give us an insight into all that surrounds us; that He would keep our feet from the snares which the world lays for us. We listen to every good advice; are grateful for all instruction, for we desire to grow in wisdom; we are anxious that all men with whom we are connected, should assist us in the work of sanctification; should warn us and tell us when we err. Our only object is to purify the feelings, to diminish the desires, to overcome the passions, to raise the mind beyond space and time, and to drink from the Source that alone can quench all thirst forever. Our breastplate and our weapon is Jesus Christ; to Him we look up in the hour of danger; before Him we bend the knee in times of peace and security. For He alone can help; He alone can make him strong who is weak, and him rich who is poor in spirit, and him unconquerable who is surrounded by the greatest dangers.

Finally, humility is the *crown* of righteousness by faith. Not the deed we do, deserves any praise or can claim any merit, but all glory belongs to that Power which gave us the will to do the deed. Not the gift we offer should receive the honor, but

the love of Christ in us, that induces us to bring it. Not the pressing of the hand of an enemy, not the lips speaking the word of reconciliation, can claim any merit, but the mildness and kindness of Christ, living and active in us. All the power, by which we can do anything good, comes from Him, who is the only source and fountain of all good ; all we possess is His, except sin : to Him belongs all merit and all glory ; for He commences the work in us, and completes it also.

2. The text, in the second place, speaks of the *fruits* of righteousness. What has been wrought by Christ internally, Paul declares must show itself externally. Let us however notice, that Paul speaks of *fruits* and not of *works*. Works may be *artificial* ; they may appear to be what they are not really. They may be beautiful, and still the disposition in which they are done, the intention which is their soul, may be poisonous ; they may be in outward conformity to the law, whilst they are utterly immoral. *Fruits* on the other hand are *organic* productions, which cannot be brought forth by art or evil design ; they are not the works of the sun, nor of the air, nor of rain—though all of them are necessary,—but the natural productions of that juice, which lives in the tree, which produces the leaf, the bud, and the blossom, and finally concentrates itself in the fruit, continues to live in it and gives witness to the world of its nature. As the fruit now is potentially in the seed, so all good deeds

are inclosed in that righteousness, which we have by faith; and if Christ own *this*, He must own all it contains and produces. Again: as natural as it is, for the healthy seed, when sunk into the fructifying bosom of the earth, and favored by the vivifying rays of the sun, to spring up and produce its fruits;—so natural and necessary is it also, that righteousness planted in us by Christ, exercise and develop its life, and produce those fruits which are inclosed in it, *love, joy, peace, forbearance, mildness, kindness, chastity*. And this *ought* not only to be so, but it *cannot* be *otherwise*. As little as that which does not shine can be light; or that which does not emit heat can be fire; or that which does not utter itself can be power; or that which is not active can be life; as little as the plant which does not produce grapes, but thistles, can be a vine; or the tree which does not bear figs, but grapes, can be a fig tree;—so little can that be righteousness, which does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. By its fruits we know the tree; if holiness dwells in our hearts, it will flow forth, for with what the heart is filled, of that it overflows; if righteousness *lives* in us, it will embrace our whole life, in all its smaller and greater, in its private and public relations. It will embrace all our wishes, desires, and undertakings, all of which will develop themselves from it, as branches, leaves, and blossoms naturally grow forth from the seed.

3. Paul says further: Being filled with the

fruits of righteousness. A tree that is sound and upon which all necessary conditions exert a favorable influence, will be full of fruits; every branch, every twig will be laden, and even the tender leaves will conceal many. So ought the Christian's life to be filled with many fruits of righteousness. He lives for a great destination. Among men he is to ripen for the circles of angels, and to commence a life that shall be completed only in another world. Can he be *negligent*? He has a great Pattern, every minute of whose life was devoted to our salvation, and whose meat and drink it was to do the will of his Father in heaven: shall the Christian be satisfied with a few unconnected efforts? The Christian, by the grace of God, enjoys a heavenly strength and power; for he knows that he is of a divine origin, that he is under a holy protection, that he has a heavenly Ally, and he feels that though he be weak, yet his Saviour in him is mighty: shall not his works, his labors, his undertakings, aim at something beyond that which common men effect? The Christian remembers that there is a day of judgment, when he must give an account of all he has done, of what he has thought or felt, of what he has accomplished or neglected: ought he not to watch and to pray, lest he enter into temptation? Lest he do not apply his precious time to the glory of God? The tree of a Christian's life, acting under a consciousness of his call, must be laden with the fruits of righteousness. If righteousness fills our

thoughts, sanctifies our feelings, guides our feet, stimulates our faculties, and enters into all our relations, blessing and adorning them, will not our efforts produce fruits to ripen in eternity? Should we not, then, be diligent members of our families, and agreeable companions in society; tender givers and grateful receivers; willing to make a promise for a good work and faithful in keeping it; kind to a friend and forgiving to an enemy; cheerful in the fulfilment of duties, patient in suffering, casting all our cares on Christ? If the Christian is what he *ought* to be, fruit will follow upon fruit, for he prospers in the rays of a mild and of a heavenly sun.

4. But do we not feel, as if the mark toward which we press, can never be reached by beings weak and frail as we are? Does it not seem as if our tree of righteousness can produce but a few miserable fruits? It is not *we*, according to Paul, who are active, but *Christ in us*; He works through us: "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by *Jesus Christ*," says the text.

Whilst in a state of sinfulness, the tree of our life bore only wild and poisonous fruits; for our works were the works of darkness, dead works, externally beautiful but bitter within. Through Christ, however, a heavenly scion has been grafted on an earthly trunk, and the same tree now produces entirely different fruits. In the converted, flesh and blood no longer prevail, but the Lord, Christ Jesus. The Spirit has slain the old man and in-

stilled a principle which has made everything new. The spiritually dead have been quickened; the law of the members no longer contradicts the will of God; though we may fail, for man *errs* as long as he lives, yet we trust in Christ, who will not leave us nor forsake us. Through Christ in us, therefore, the fruits of righteousness are produced. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can we except we abide in Christ and He in us.

5. Finally, the text speaks of "fruits unto the glory and praise of God." The man of faith and righteousness perceives indeed the Glory of God in all that He has created, in the occurrences of the world, in his own fortunes or misfortunes, in his joys and sorrows, in times of trouble and peace, in death and in life, nay even vice and sin must glorify God and serve Him. But nothing in nature nor in history, is so well calculated to glorify God and praise Him, as the fruits of righteousness, for the Glory of God is their direct result and their object. It is their *result*, for they glorify Him among those by whom Christians are surrounded. They see in the fruits of righteousness the influence of the Spirit and power of God; they cannot but acknowledge a disposition sanctified by a higher principle than earth with all it has can impart; they must confess that God is wise and great and worthy of adoration, when they see our love, our zeal, our forgiveness of injuries, and above all our peace and joy in the

hour of death. Whilst our light shines before them, they may, perhaps, through it see Him, whom before they knew not; and this is ever the *object* of the many fruits which our righteousness produces here on earth. Their end and main purpose is that the kingdom of Christ be spread on earth, that His will be done among us as it is done in heaven. Wrought through Christ in us, can these fruits be without His spirit? If we are true Christians, true followers of our Saviour, then wherever *we* go the *kingdom* of our Redeemer will go likewise, wherever *we* are, the love within us will flow forth as water flows from a fountain. We will strive above all things to do His will whom we profess to serve; we will desire that the time may come when all shall know the Lord and praise and adore Him forever. The earth and all that is in it, is the Lord's; can we endure it, that He, who is the Creator of all, be any longer deprived of that gratitude and submission which are due Him? That honor be given any longer to idols, passions, and vices?

It is for this reason that Christians under all circumstances, in every occupation, and in all their duties, prove themselves to be the servants of God, laboring for His glory; that they consider it the supreme purpose of their lives to work with conscientiousness, with circumspection, with care, with perseverance, and with faithfulness, for the honor of their Creator; that they approve the things that are more excellent; and that it is their meat and

drink to aid all attempts that are made for the propagation of the Gospel.

Let me then urge it upon you as your duty to be always active in some noble and good work, to labor for the salvation of others and for the spread of Christ's kingdom. If you do so, you have the satisfaction of knowing that your labor is the fruit of the righteousness which is in us through Christ Jesus. You may anticipate the favor of God, and rejoice in knowing that you fulfil a duty which our Saviour has enjoined on every believer. Your labors, like the dew that falls from heaven, will be a double blessing, a blessing to yourselves and to those for whom you labor. They will bless yourselves in eternity with a *heavenly reward*, but they will also bless you here already on earth. Activity in a good work must ennoble our talents and faculties, and strengthen us in wisdom and knowledge. It is but too true, that sense and all visible things exercise an irresistible power over us, and that in all we undertake, we look principally to our own advantage. How beneficial then must it not be to your disposition to be active, not in the work of your own will, but in the work of Him who lived and died for us! How beneficial must it not be to your character to take thought not for your own advantage, for your own honor, for your own gain, but for the honor of Him who did not seek His own

honor, but that of His Father in Heaven, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross !

Again : It is only by exercise that our spiritual as well as our intellectual faculties are developed and perfected. You cannot be active in a good cause, you cannot labor for the salvation of others without benefiting yourselves, without producing the fruits of patience, submission, perseverance, humility, confidence in the blessing of God ; and the greater the difficulties in your way, the more readily will these fruits grow. Though you labor in a good work your existence will obtain a higher value in the eyes of God and man, your character a nobler tendency, your activity a more desirable object, your thoughts and endeavors will be directed more towards that which is above, and upon all you do, you will stamp the spirit of truth, of love, and of order.

And in doing so you will call God's blessing upon those for whom you labor in promoting the spread of the Gospel. If you will labor with cheerfulness you must consider yourselves instruments in the hands of God ; you must be convinced that through you He has determined in His eternal counsel to call many from death unto life. Perhaps it may seem sometimes as if your labors are not blessed ; but can you believe that He who has commenced a good work will leave it unfinished ? *What we sow we shall also reap* : but is there no lapse of time between the season of sowing and that of reaping ? It is our

lot to sow in hope, and labor in blessing; to commence an undertaking in the hope that it will prosper; to cultivate the land in the hope that it will produce a harvest; to navigate the ocean in the hope that it will yield its tribute; to preach the Gospel, in the hope that its truth will win souls to Christ. Shall it be otherwise with your labors? Sometimes the blessing of our endeavors retires into remote places and distant times, and will not be known to us until eternity reveals it; whilst at other times sowing and reaping occur almost in the same hour. Sometimes he who scatters the seed sinks into the earth with it; the seed grows and blooms around his grave, and another seems to reap what he has sown: but are not the dead that die in the Lord blessed, for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them? How many a one may be won for Christ by the zeal of a minister who does not know the fact; and whilst separated from each other by hills and valleys, they work in the same spirit, and for the same Master! How many a one, without our imagining it, is first called by our example and piety to turn his attention to the truth of the Gospel, and is finally converted by the grace of God! How many a one, without our remembering him any longer, remembers our words, and finds in them comfort and consolation amid his cares and trials! How many a one may take our names on his lips whilst his heart beats with joy and gratitude! Does not many a

venerable teacher sink into the grave, without seeing the fruits, the seeds of which he has sown without knowing to the full extent the love, gratitude, and attachment of those who weep over his memory and bless his name!

Yet what is all blessing on earth compared with that which we will see hereafter in Heaven. When you rest from your labors, your works will follow you. All is vanity on earth; the treasures you collect; the works you complete or leave unfinished; the improvements of your farms; the changes you effect; the tokens of applause you may receive from the world: all is vain and void, when you turn away from the Visible to the Invisible. But if you lead a soul to God, if you glorify and honor His name in all you do, if the power of His kingdom comes, wherever you go—then your endeavors will not be vain, but they will yield fruits which will ripen *for* eternity, and which you will see and enjoy only *in* eternity. This is a heavenly reward, a blessing invisible on earth.

May you therefore not only labor from a sense of duty, but may it be your daily meat and drink, as it was that of our Saviour. May you continue to work as long as it is day. The night will come soon: let us, therefore, follow Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. Amen.

THE HUMILITY OF THE INNER LIFE.

LUKE 18: 9-14.

“And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others :—Two men went up into the temple to pray ; the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other : for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

LORD, our Heavenly Father ! before Thee all the hosts of Heaven bow ; and all the inhabitants of the earth adore Thee in the dust. Thou art great, and Thy greatness is incomprehensible even to angels, that enjoy Thy light throughout all eternity. We, who are full of weakness and sin, full of frailty and guilt, whose minds are shrouded in darkness—we would not dare to approach Thee, if Thy grace and mercy did not equal Thy greatness and majesty. It is this grace that raises us up, when the thought of Thy awful greatness presses us down to the dust ; and while we approach Thee full of reverence, we come, at the same time, like children that know the unbounded love of their Father in Heaven.

Our prayer to-day is, O Lord! that Thou wilt awaken in us, and preserve in us, a deep sense of our manifold transgressions against Thy holy law; and that Thou wilt grant us humility.

Grant humility to all nations, that they may not grow proud, and foolish, and inconsiderate; that they may not thirst, from ambition, after any other glory but that which they will derive from the promotion of Thy honor.

Grant humility to all those in power, and especially to those, who in Thy providence are at the head of our own Government. May they understand it, and acknowledge it, that they are responsible to Thee for all they do.

Grant humility to all citizens of our country; to the rich, as well as to the poor; to the young as well as to the aged. May all of them say daily: Lord be merciful to us, miserable sinners.

O Lord! we pray Thee, grant humility to the youth collected here. Suffer none of them to aspire after his own honor; suffer none to seek for knowledge and science on their own account merely; but may they seek it for the purpose of advancing happiness, and of promoting Thy kingdom. May all of them enter life in humility; may it be their meat and drink to do Thy will, and to go whithersoever thou callest them; and may, in humility, the one esteem the other higher than himself.

And now, Lord! purify, and sanctify, and strengthen, and console all of us by granting us

humility. Bless the happy with humility, that they may not fix their desires upon vanity. Bless the unfortunate with humility, that they may feel Thy nearness. Bless the wealthy, that they may not place their hopes upon uncertain riches; and bless the poor, that in the midst of poverty they may feel rich in Thee. Reign over all of us, and lead us; speak to us and we will hear; command Thou and we will obey; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power; and to Thee all honor and glory are due, from eternity to eternity.

Our text represents to us two moral characters, which are in direct opposition to each other. The one is that of selfishness and pride, the other that of humility and a consciousness of guilt before God. The former is exhibited in the Pharisee, the latter in the Publican.

The Pharisee blesses God because he fasts twice a week and pays the tenth of all he has; because he is not an extortioner, not unjust, not an adulterer; because he is not as the Publican, but rather better than he.

The Publican, on the other hand, standing afar off, silent, his eyes cast down, seems to be lost in meditation, and in the feeling of his unworthiness; and all that he thinks and all that he says, is expressed in the sigh that rises deep from his heart: "*God be merciful to me, a sinner.*"

The words both of the Pharisee and the Publican were uttered in a *prayer*. Prayer, whether uttered or unexpressed, is the immediate conversation of the soul with God, by which we acknowledge that God not only *hears*, but also *knows* us. Whatever any one says in prayer, may generally be considered as evincing his whole being, as expressing fully his true thoughts and feelings. For this reason the Pharisee and the Publican are represented as praying. In reading this passage, we feel constrained therefore to believe, that the Pharisee has good reason to consider himself free from the crimes he enumerates, or else he would not dare to boast before God; and that the Publican has committed some gross sins, or else his prayer would betray a false and hypocritical humility, which must displease Him, who can only love truth. Yet, whilst the Pharisee possesses, in his view, a legal righteousness of which he is proud, and the Publican is a poor and miserable sinner, Christ says :

“I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.” And he adds as the reason : “For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The truth clearly contained, especially in the latter words of this passage, is simply this : Pride and selfishness must cause a fall, but humility elevates us to true greatness. The theme of this discourse will therefore be *humility, considered as the only*

means of becoming truly great. To prove this, I shall show, in the first place, the nature both of pride and humility ; and secondly : how each manifests itself in life, and what results it produces.

I. It is natural, in proportion as we become conscious of our talents, capacities, and all the advantages we possess really and in truth, not only to acknowledge, but also to love them ; and whilst we should not exhibit them unnecessarily, neither should we from a false and hypocritical modesty conceal them. It is natural, too, to place the proper value upon them ; truth demands this of us ; and if from a proud desire of appearing humble, we undervalue them, we wrong God, the Creator and Giver of all, we wrong ourselves and no doubt mistake the proper use to be made of them. It is natural, moreover, that when we look upon the many noble powers man possesses, to be struck with the idea, that he is destined for something great ; that as the mode of his existence differs from that of every other being on earth, so his destination after death will differ from that of all the creatures of which we have any knowledge. But selfishness or pride perverts all this. It not only attributes to us faculties and powers and good qualities, merits and advantages, which we have not at all, but places also a value upon those we have, which they do not possess. It overlooks the blemishes in earthly beauty, the frailty of all human strength, the

weakness of all human power, and the sinfulness of every virtue, which man aims at without the aid of a sanctifying spirit from above. Pride makes us forget God, who is the author and preserver of all we possess, and prompts us to ascribe everything to our own wisdom and skill and diligence and perseverance and merit. It inflates us with a perfect self-satisfaction; it does not permit us to perceive anything reproachful in ourselves, for it teaches us to prize everything pertaining to ourselves, because it is part of ourselves. Hence it is that in our own estimation, of all decisions ours are the best; of all creeds ours is the only true one; of all works ours are most perfect; of all actions ours are most praiseworthy; and if we should even feel constrained to acknowledge some weaknesses, pride teaches us how to beautify and excuse them; so that in comparison with the frailties of others ours still retain the character of virtue. Thus wrapt up in selfishness, pride draws around us a magic circle whose centre we are ourselves; and whatever is beautiful and good is to be found only within it, while all that is without it is less attractive and lovely.

From this it will sufficiently appear, that pride never aims at anything higher than what it possesses already. If we are satisfied with ourselves, if we imagine we are good and perfect, can we aspire to anything higher or desire to alter anything in our character? If we have already what

we desire, if our highest wishes are gratified, and we have no sense of want, what can give us the impulse to seek for any change?

If it be true, however, that even the best of us, like Achilles, are vulnerable in some place or other, that even the best among men are sinners, liable to temptations from within and from without, that all of us share the same dangers and the same guilt;—then nothing can protect us from destruction, but a higher power which pride rejects, and nothing can lead us to true greatness in life but humility.

Humility bases itself upon a deep feeling of the greatness of God, of the perfection of all His attributes, upon a sense of our own weakness and frailty, and of our dependence on God for everything we possess. Humility rests on the conviction, that what we possess and can do, that what we are and effect, depends on Him who reigns over the universe; that the body is but dust, and with all its beauty or strength will soon be the prey of death, that it is like a flower, which blooms to-day and withers to-morrow. Humility rests on the fact, that our knowledge is limited, our understanding is surrounded by darkness; that our strength is easily exhausted, and that our highest power can move but a few atoms in a small space. But especially does humility rest upon the sense of guilt and sinfulness attending us constantly. We are not only weak, but full of sin, transgressors of God's law;

our transgressions are not only many, but they are odious and full of evil consequences. We are constantly either stumbling or falling in the path of wickedness; if we do not reject and violate the law of God in one or the other case, we obey it only from impure motives, from fear or hope. Thus, by holding up before us the purity and holiness of God, humility teaches us to know ourselves as we are; it turns our eyes away from gazing on our external advantages, and fixes them upon the condition of our hearts. If this be corrupt, if the fountain of our feelings and thoughts and the soul of our actions be poisoned, what flows forth from it, what is nourished by it, however beautifully and luxuriantly it may grow, cannot be great and good, but must bear the germ of death and decay within.

It is this knowledge of ourselves which humility gives us, that becomes not only the means of producing a genuine reform and change of heart, but that also impels us to go onward and not to rest satisfied at any point of progress which we have reached. Thus humility does not only give us a deep sense of our deficiencies, but impels us too, to exert ourselves to remove them; whilst pride, self-complacent and satisfied with all its attainments, never attempts a change for the better, but produces moral torpidity and lethargy.

Pride and Humility differ, further, in the object which each desires. What is great to the one is little to the other. Pride or selfishness considers anything

great that more than ordinarily strikes and dazzles the senses, that is connected with power and honor before the world ; or that shines and glitters, attracts and allures our sensual nature. Pride considers anything great that excites the admiration of our fellow-men and raises us above them, that excites astonishment, fear, or terror ; as splendid talents, beauty, arts, knowledge, gold and riches, thrones and principalities, power and influence, monuments of ancient heroes and the ruins of bygone ages, wars and revolutions, and all terrible phenomena in nature. The greatness of pride is therefore *external, earthly, and transient* ; and if ever it desires moral greatness, it is satisfied with the external action ; it seeks to acquire it by single, disconnected, and isolated efforts that are not united internally by spirit or plan.

The greatness of humility, on the other hand, is *internal, heavenly, and permanent*. Not the power we possess is great, nor the influence we exert, but the purpose by them to effect something for eternity. Otherwise both power and influence are little and insignificant, if compared with the power and efficiency of God. Not the action we perform is great, but the will that designs it ; not the honor we enjoy deserves to be called great, but the merit that renders us worthy of it. Not the gift we offer to the poor is great, but the love that disposes us to offer it ; not the pressing of the hand of an enemy, but the meekness and mildness that moves the

hand. It is not the amount of our knowledge, nor the degree of our skill in art, nor the vigor of our talents, that is great, but the benevolent motive from which we acquire knowledge and cultivate the arts, and the benign purpose to which we apply them. The greatness of humility does not consist in a single action, isolated and by itself, nor in many disconnected actions, nor in a regular series of actions;—but in that which is the never-changing basis of all actions, which is their soul and source, in a purified disposition, in a sanctified heart, in a noble and generous will, that seeks only that which is good and right, which agrees with the will of God and pleases Him—in a will that seeks that which raises the destiny of man and brings him nearer to his Creator, and which in heaven as well as on earth, in a future world as well as in the present, before God as well as before man, retains its unchangeable value. This internal greatness is the same, whether actions represent it externally or not; it is an indivisible whole and cannot appear in single actions; even the best action gives only an unsatisfactory expression of it. We may succeed in exhibiting learning, strength, skill, art, but it is utterly impossible to exhibit this internal greatness; it is only known to God, and though it constantly produces noble works, no work is equal to itself. Hence humility struggles continually to harmonize the external with the internal life, action with feeling, conduct with

principle, daily conversation in the world with the worship of the sanctuary.

It is evident, that the greatness of pride is external and must sooner or later vanish, while that of humility is internal and will remain forever. There can be no doubt, then, but that pride leads off from true greatness and offers in its place a phantom, a mere *ignis fatuus*, that shines and allures, but disappears as soon as you approach to examine it. Yet there is also another difference, which though of importance and great influence on our character, I shall only mention in a few words. Pride desires what is great on its own account only; and filled with a desire for transient and perishable objects, it can never be satisfied, but must always remain little and contracted in its character. Humility on the other hand seeks all its greatness in the honor of God. It desires nothing on its own account, but wishes to be swallowed up in the greatness of God. Its character must, therefore, expand and grow in nobleness in proportion as it becomes more and more conscious of this true greatness. It does not disdain beauty, nor talents, nor knowledge, nor art, nor skill, nor power and riches; but it rejoices in all of them, like the pilgrim rejoices in the flowers that spring up on both sides of his path. As he bends down with intense delight to pluck them, not for the purpose of keeping them, but of weaving them into a garland to hang around the shrine at which he worships, so humility rejoices in all it has, in

all transient and earthly greatness, to honor by it our Creator.

II. I shall now, in the second place, show *how pride and humility manifest themselves*, and for the sake of brevity, leave my hearers to infer how the former is prejudicial to and the latter promotive of true greatness.

Our views and feelings, our purposes and our whole manner of thinking, are the fountain of all our actions and determine their moral value. These motives, though they are to the action what the soul is to the body, are invisible and cannot be judged of by any one, except the person who is the subject of them. Pride, now, or selfishness, will teach us to put the best construction upon them, to make our impure motives, our selfish intentions and desires, our ignoble maxims appear better than they are, to excuse them as having resulted from the unavoidable weakness and imperfection of human nature, or to beautify them, by calling our faults by milder names. Voluptuousness is but tenderness; obstinacy is firmness of character; parsimony is economy; calculating selfishness or craftiness is prudence; cruelty is justice; offensive coldness is tranquil reason; an entire want of charity is but an impartiality of judgment.

Humility, on the other hand, manifests itself in an entirely different manner. It exhibits to us all our frailties and faults with all their consequences;

it does not induce us to deny nor to excuse them, but to acknowledge them. It shows that the cause of our faults is not without, not in circumstances, not in other persons, but in us ; that it is our own neglect, a want of attention or devotion.

Again : Pride manifests itself by giving us a feeling of entire security.

It causes us to rely on our own strength and wisdom, and to despise all temptation and dangers. Deceived by it, we soon reach the highest point of security, where, overvaluing our moral powers, we no longer suspect ourselves nor fear anything around us. Then we neither notice the danger and temptation, which accompany external impressions upon us ; nor flee the opportunity of doing evil ; nor shun the snares, which are strewed around us by passion, by habit, by society, by a combination of circumstances, by the bustle of the world, and by the silence of the house. Everywhere we are exposed to temptations, and all within us is susceptible of being affected by these temptations ; the excitability of youth and the dulness of age ; the zeal with which we undertake a benevolent scheme, and the caution with which we execute it ; every state and character has its corresponding temptations, and we must be constantly on our guard ;—but pride will not suffer us to acknowledge this truth ; it blinds us so that though on the brink of an abyss, we do not see danger, but plunge into it.

Humility, on the other hand, keeps constantly

awake in us the consciousness of our weakness and frailty. It reminds us of every error we have committed ; it represents to us, how we have either neglected or violated a duty, have left works unfinished, failed in our plans, or have grown cold in our zeal. This consciousness of our weakness forbids us to consider ourselves stronger than we are, to risk more than we can perform. It awakens a just suspicion against ourselves, teaches us to avoid all danger, to resist resolutely the first temptation, to be cautious in everything, to watch over our hearts and give an account of every impression, that old or new acquaintances, known or unknown, near or distant objects, make upon us. It is this consciousness that inclines our ears to listen to advice ; that makes us grateful for every admonition of friends or enemies, that disposes us to ask for the assistance of all our companions in conquering our evil propensities. Thus watching over ourselves, over all our feelings, and views, and motives, over all the changes that take place in us, we shall grow in virtue, and piety, and greatness ; yet we will ascribe all honor not to ourselves, but to Christ ; for all the aid we receive, every word that warns, every hand that protects us, we cannot help considering as marks of divine grace and goodness.

Again : Pride, placing too high a value upon our own actions, renders us satisfied with what we have done, while humility constantly impels and urges us to strive after higher wisdom and greatness.

The Pharisee fasts twice a week and pays the tenth of all he has; these actions are externally good enough, though they may be mere ceremonies, forms, without the spirit which should produce them;—yet the Pharisee places such a value upon them, that he feels satisfied with himself. Every deed is in the eye of pride an heroic deed; every virtue one of the highest; every victory we gain over ourselves, a proof of an uncommon strength of character and mind. Pride imagines that it has reached the goal, when it has but begun the race. If pride however should discover the same good qualities in another, they would appear insignificant. Yet great as everything that is good in us is to pride, so small also and unworthy of notice are the many immoral and sinful propensities we have. Though we may practice all kinds of injustice, be given to avarice and ambition, indulge envy and jealousy—if we have but *one* good quality, it will be sufficient to assuage our conscience and overshadow all our corruptions. Hence it is, that pride placing too high a value upon our own actions, feels satisfied with itself and relies on its own righteousness.

Humility, on the other hand, is never satisfied with any work or with any action, that may appear great or good to the world. Surrounded by the light of grace, the feeling of our unworthiness must daily grow stronger, our desire for divine assistance

greater, our repentance on account of sin more sincere. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Phil. 3: 7-9.) Humility acknowledges in Christ all-purifying power; to Him it looks up in the hour of danger; from Him it hopes to receive the impulse to good resolutions, and the strength to execute them; to Him it prays for power to bear up under misfortunes and to go from one degree of perfection to another; and always says: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me; and whatever is good in my actions is His and not mine.

Finally: Pride induces us to disparage our fellow-men and overrate ourselves in comparison with them.

To see what we are, we must frequently look upon others and see what they are; and to know them we must look into our own hearts. Alone, entirely alone, no man would be able to become acquainted with himself. Yet pride does not suffer us to compare ourselves with those that are better than ourselves, but only with those whom we

know to be inferior, with robbers, extortioners, adulterers, and publicans. If however we meet with some excellencies in others, that we do not possess, pride will induce us to detract from their moral value in order to bring them down to a level with our own.

Humility, on the other hand, points out as the only proper object of comparison, not one of our fellow-men, but Christ our Saviour; His life, so richly adorned with all good works, His sufferings and death, so beautifully evincing His divine love and holiness. Christ is the ideal of all the endeavors of an humble Christian; all he does, however great it may appear to the world, will be insignificant and sinful, when compared with what Christ has done, whose only meat and drink it was to do the will of His Father; who spent His life and His strength for us, who like the sun, spread joy and happiness and life everlasting, whithersoever He went, who considered no work too low, and no labor too condescending. The humble Christian, comparing his life with that of Christ, looks at the holiness and love and perfections of Christ as the goal of his race; whatever lies below that is neither truly great nor desirable. Nor does the contrast which he perceives between himself and the perfections of Christ, discourage him, for he relies on Divine grace, and this reliance excites him to constantly renewed efforts, revives his strength, increases his zeal, and carries him steadily onward.

He is like a traveller who intends ascending the top of a high mountain for the purpose of seeing the sun set in all his splendor and glory. He passes through quiet and lovely valleys; here a little rivulet invites him by its murmuring waters to sink down and rest himself, and there swelling banks of moss offer him an agreeable seat; yet he goes on, having the end of his journey in view. He passes through green and dark woods, that animated by the songs of birds and cooled by the refreshing breezes rustling among the leaves and branches, urge him to lie down under the shady trees and enjoy himself:—but he keeps the end of his journey in view, and pursues his way unmindful of his fatigue. At length he arrives at the desired spot; he sees the glory of the setting sun; he reviews the road over which he has come; he looks with delight upon the smiling landscape behind him; and rejoices in the idea, that he was able to withstand all temptations to give over the execution of his purpose. Such a traveller is the Christian. No deprivation, no self-denial, no pleasure, and no advantageous comparison with others, can allure or decoy him; he goes on not as though he had already attained, either were already perfect; but he follows after if that he may apprehend that, for which also he is apprehended of Christ Jesus; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, he presses toward the mark for the prize of the high calling

of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3 : 12-14) : he presses forward to the end of his pilgrimage and ceases never ; and the setting sun of his life on earth will be to him the rising sun of eternity.

Let us now endeavor to turn the whole subject to some practical account.

Humility, as we have seen, is the only means of effecting anything in life worthy of our high calling ; it is important, therefore, that we strive with all our might to be in possession of it.

1. To cultivate humility we must, above all, seek to become acquainted with our faults and frailties. Though it is not agreeable to search for them, they will not cease to be faults and frailties, because we conceal them from ourselves ; nor will they be less injurious to true greatness, because we imagine ourselves free from them.

2. We must close our ears to flattery, and keep them open to the admonitions of friends. We feel much inclined to explain both praise and reproach to our advantage. Not only do we believe praise to be fully true and reproach to be ungrounded, but also that by the former less was said than really was meant ; and by the latter *more*. The high opinion we have of ourselves, will naturally, on the one hand, make us believe that we deserve all the praise bestowed upon us, and on the other, that every reproach or reprimand is uncalled for. Hence,

whatever is intended as an admonition by parents, or teachers, or friends, is offensive and insulting to our aspiring mind ; does not instruct, but embitters us ; does not convince us, but arouses our indignation ; does not correct our mistakes, but only confirms us in them. To become humble, we must not only be willing to have others point out our faults, but we must be thankful to them for doing so, even though their eyes should be sharpened by envy, or jealousy, or ambition, and though their manner should not be charitable.

3. We must examine closely those qualities in us, which we are in the habit of considering good. Perhaps they are so, externally ; but then let us ask in how far we owe the possession of them, either to circumstances that a kind providence has placed around us, to early education, to good examples, or to the immediate gift of God—and we shall soon discover how little merit we possess ourselves. Others, circumstanced as we, endowed with the same talents, would have effected much more than we have done ; though we might surpass them externally, in true internal greatness we would be below them. But, perhaps, these qualities are even not as good as we take them to be ; perhaps they rest on a selfish, proud, and corrupt basis, on a refined calculation of their use and worldly benefit to us ; perhaps they stand by the side of hate, and avarice, and ambition ; then, a close examination will reveal to us the utter absence of goodness in them,

and force us to feel humble, instead of being proud ; to feel guilty, instead of self-righteous ; to see sin and wickedness in us, instead of virtue and goodness.

4. To become humble, we must learn to endure contradictions from others. Contradiction is an element of that process by which we attain to the knowledge of truth, both moral and religious. It is contradiction that shows us, too, how much less our authority, our importance, our influence is, than we may have imagined ; how much we must free ourselves yet from vanity ; how much we must labor and pray for divine assistance in our endeavors to acquire true, in a word, *godly* greatness of character.

5. Finally, to become humble we must consider it a truth established beyond doubt, that whenever we feel no kind of uneasiness concerning the state of our souls or concerning our character, we are truly in great danger. There is no one who has not daily, yea hourly cause to exclaim : God be merciful to me, a sinner. If any one should nevertheless be able to say : I thank thee, Lord, that I am better than other men, he would deceive himself. In proportion as we become greater in virtue, will we see the ideal of true greatness more distinctly, and perceive more clearly how far off we are from it. The more tender our conscience grows by a holy desire to be good, the more odious will even the *smallest* offence appear to us. Entire self-

satisfaction is therefore the surest sign of entire unworthiness and of great danger.

May God put it into the heart of every one present, to strive above all after humility, as the principal means of rendering his life on earth useful both to himself and to his fellow-men ; and may this endeavor ground itself in the conviction that as we depend upon God for life and existence, for support and strength, so we depend upon Him also for a change of heart, for every good feeling we may cherish, for every good resolution we may adopt, and for every good action and work we may perform. Amen.

THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE AT JACOB'S WELL.

JOHN 4 : 10-15.

“Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

OUR life consists of two parts. One part, the visible, chains us to the dust;—the other, the invisible, raises us beyond the skies. We have some necessities, which remind us that we are dust and ashes;—we have others, which convince us that a heaven-born spirit lives in us. The heaven-born spirit in us strives heavenward, strives after perfect freedom—after independence of everything on earth—after union with its Creator—after uninterrupted happiness: but as the outstretched wings of the ostrich are drawn down again to the earth by its heavy body, so is our higher nature drawn down by our sensual desires and wants. As in the dawn

of the morning, light and darkness are blended, so our sensual wants and spiritual desires commingle; and this state of twilight frequently prevents us from seeing the pure and unmixed light of truth.

These remarks we find verified in the Samaritan woman, with whom our Lord entered into a conversation at Jacob's well. Her spirit partly understands Christ;—her sensual nature causes her to mistake his words. They sound to her heart like tones from a higher region, and she exclaims: "Give me this water that I thirst not." But scarcely has she spoken these words, when she adds: "neither come hither to draw."

Thus, by our sensual nature, it becomes difficult for us to understand the opportunities which we frequently have, to drink of that living water, which quenches all thirst forever. I shall endeavor, in accordance with the meaning of the text, to point out both this difficulty and the nature of the living water, which springs up into everlasting life. We will consider—

1. *What is meant by the words—the gift of God.*
2. *The difficulty of acknowledging the gift of God.*
3. *The nature of the living water, of which Christ speaks.*

I. The gift of God, of which Christ speaks, cannot be His *person*, for He adds: "and if thou knewest who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink." It cannot be Christ's *doctrine*, for He has not yet

given it to the woman. The gift of God, in this place, is simply the *opportunity* offered to the woman, to see and to hear Christ and to learn of Him. This opportunity our Saviour calls *the gift of God*. And a gift of God it was, like every other opportunity. It was not the work of the Samaritan woman that our Redeemer just then passed through Galilee; nor is it ever our work, when of many *possible* coincidences just the one and no other takes place, which suits our life best. All that we can do, is to accommodate our calculations for the future to what the present seems to indicate, and to make the best use of what each moment may offer us. But to call into existence what as yet is not, to mould the future, which to our eye is shrouded in darkness, for our designs, or to create favorable circumstances—this is beyond our power. If we could do this, we would compel the whole system of the world to serve the wishes of a feeble and frail creature.

The opportunity is called a gift of God, because it is a precious and gracious favor of our Creator. How many went from distant countries to Judea, to see Him, whose fame had filled the world, and perhaps did not see Him, or if they saw Him, met Him when surrounded by thousands. The Samaritan woman meets Him alone at the fountain. She receives the blessing, without seeking for it. The fruit falls down from the tree, fresh and juicy, without being shaken. What labor could not have

obtained, the opportunity gives gratuitously. A walk which she took daily, and which was always the same tedious repetition of the same thing, abounds this time in divine favor. Thus the opportunity frequently offers what neither labor, nor ingenuity, nor calculation, nor wishes, nor prayers, nor designs could have effected. The opportunity gives it without labor on our part, and in a moment.

The opportunity is not only a gift of God, but it also leads our minds up to God. The Samaritan woman had gone to draw water to quench her natural thirst, but instead of this, living water is offered to her, which springs up into everlasting life. There is no doubt, but happy circumstances of every kind may exert a favorable influence on our souls and are likely to exert it, if we are good men. But sometimes it appears as if these circumstances were designed and particularly created to operate favorably on our salvation. Without seeking, without praying, a beam of light, a stream of power, a breath of life may fall upon our hearts, just when we are in great danger of committing a sin, or of making a mistake; suddenly, unexpectedly, we are strengthened; our reason sees more clearly; our will receives a new direction, more noble, more dignified, and our whole life is benefited in one single moment. Such an opportunity, such favorable circumstances, we call a gift of God, a precious, a special favor of our Creator.

II. But it is difficult to understand our opportunity and make a proper use of it. As glittering gold in the hand of the magician is changed into useless charcoal, before we can touch it, so may favorable circumstances change and assume an opposite character, before we have improved them.

To *understand* our opportunity means to use it without delay; to perceive how the present circumstances are adapted to our situation, to our wishes, to our designs; to hear in them a call, coming from God, who will assist us in the work we have before us, who will lead us to connections, to possessions, to enjoyments, which, without such circumstances, we would not be able to obtain. It is to feel that we are under obligations, to use that most carefully to realize the destination of our life, which is best calculated to facilitate our labor. To understand our opportunity means, to eternize the favorable moment, at least in its effects, since it is itself fleeting, and since we cannot retard the wheel of time, which rolls on without intermission. The condition, constitution, and destiny of every man has something peculiar to itself, and circumstances favorable to one may not be so to another. We must therefore not expect that our opportunity will be just the same as that, which another has had, but every man has an opportunity peculiar to himself and to his situation. To understand our opportunity means, therefore, to direct our whole attention to whatever may

ripen for us in the bosom of time ; to whatever may be advantageous to our welfare, in time and eternity, be it small or great, here or there, now or hereafter.

Hence it is necessary to watch our opportunity. Favorable circumstances, fortunate junctures, happy occurrences, are for the life of man what good weather is for the husbandman. If the weather is good and clear, the grain ripens quickly, and without care or trouble, the laborers go forth cheerfully and joyfully to reap it. Thus it is when Providence smiles upon us. Then the right thoughts come easily. Then we enter the right way without difficulty ; then what we need falls into our hands. Labor requires no reflection, and succeeds nevertheless. What at other times would bring us loss, now brings us gain. But these moments are but short, and pass by rapidly. The state of favorable circumstances which we might improve, changes suddenly, and then the opportunity is gone. Nor do these favors of Providence return very frequently. They are rare, and sometimes present themselves but *once* throughout our whole life. To lose them *once* is to lose them *forever*. How much then depends on the understanding of our opportunity for our own peace, for our happiness, and that of our connections, for the success of our activity, and even for *the salvation of our souls!*

But it is *difficult* to understand our opportunity, or to discern the circumstances favorable to us.

There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at its height, leads on to fortune. Such a tide occurs in the affairs of all men, but they are not always prepared to take it at its height. An opportunity sometimes surprises us in an unfavorable moment, when we feel fatigued, or when we are too much excited or overcome by passion. We then cannot discern quickly nor reflect coolly. At other times the *opportunity* seems to be something different from what it really is. What has a tendency to relieve us may appear as a source of embarrassment. What is intended to revive us may appear to be like a damper on our spirits. Gain may look like loss. Means to deliver our souls from their reproachful chains may look like another fetter. Children whom *we* teach, and from whom we would never expect instruction, may give us an impulse to piety. An apparent misfortune may be instrumental in bringing about our eternal salvation and happiness.

Thus Christ appears before the Samaritan woman without any signs of distinction, like a common man in form and habit, solitary, without pretence to power or might, a Jew, one that belongs to that nation which hated the Samaritans, and carefully avoided all intercourse with them. And yet so poor in His appearance, Christ, the Saviour, presented Himself to her.

O! that our hearts may be pure, and our will be sanctified, that in every occurrence of life we may

perceive the hand of God, and consider nothing as unimportant; that we may also remember our home beyond the skies, and bring everything with which we come into contact, into a relation to our eternal destination! Then shall we never have cause for the complaint, that our opportunity, which no grief and no repentance can recall, has passed by unimproved.

III. We ask, in the third place, what was the peculiar nature of the living water, which the Samaritan woman had an opportunity to ask Christ for? And here we shall find, that it has *two peculiar and principal qualities*. The one is this: it does not only refresh us when we are thirsty, like all other water, but it satisfies our thirst entirely, and so that we shall never thirst again. The other is that, being living water, it has a creative power; it renews our whole existence. As a spark falling upon a combustible substance kindles a new flame like the one from which it came, so the living water when received, becomes a fountain in us springing up into eternity.

But how can it quench the thirst forever? Does not every one of us ask thus?

It satisfies our thirst forever, *because it is pure and unmixed*. In the world we see commingled strength and weakness, virtue and vice, truth and error, joy and sorrow, rest and fatigue, hope and despair, light and darkness, life and death. There

is nothing pure, and nothing perfect; everything has its wants, and every gratification leaves some uneasiness in our mind from which new wants and new desires may arise again; like the fabled Phoenix which never dies, but always revives from its own ashes.

The living water satisfies our thirst forever, because it is *always rich and always cheering*, gives us what we need, and satisfies us whenever we enjoy anything through it. In the world you can sometimes not obtain what you need most, and frequently whilst you are surrounded by abundance you can make no use of it; like Tantalus, before whose scorched lips the waters that play around his chin, retire as soon as he bends his head to drink of them.

The living water quenches our thirst forever, because it flows *freely and eternally*. In the world many pleasures are unnatural, and forced upon our appetites; knowledge and virtue, good works and honors, festivals and amusements, are mostly or ever short-lived and frail—the products of time and its victims. And even the sources of *all* our earthly enjoyments frequently dry up and disappear entirely.

The living water satisfies our thirst forever, because it blesses those that drink it; because it fills our souls with the peace of God, that surpasses all knowledge; because it secures to us our eternal salvation, and frees us from all fear, from all care, from all trouble, from all anxiety; raises our minds up be-

yond the skies; purifies our feelings; sanctifies our will; makes us seek for what is eternal, and scorn what is merely frail, and vain, and decaying.

It satisfies our thirst forever, because, finally, it becomes a living fountain in us, springing up into everlasting life. Let us follow up this idea for a moment.

What is it that men thirst very much for? Men thirst for strength or power, that they may use it according to their circumstances, according to their wishes, and according to their sphere of action. Whoever drinks of the living water, receives that strength, which as a supreme power within excites and directs all his faculties and talents to the glory of God—which unites all his scattered energies in the service of our Lord. Strength, derived from the living water, is the consciousness of our divine origin—of protection by our Saviour in all our troubles and tribulations and dangers—of the entire independence of our free souls on any power or force or might on earth. Whilst every other kind of strength is diminished or even annihilated by fatigue and exhaustion, this strength increases by struggles, and never changes, except when it gains in energy.

Men thirst for the greatest amount of knowledge and experience, acquired by their own observation and the observation of others. Through Christ we receive that knowledge which alone can satisfy the longings of the spirit. The knowledge

of Christ reveals to us the secret of our life, our destiny after death, and guides us through this dark and desolate world as the polar star guides the sailor on the pathless ocean. It is this knowledge that gives value to all other knowledge. *Without it*, all our wisdom is encircled by time and space, and in time and in space it must perish ;— *with it*, all our knowledge enters into relation to eternity and partakes of its nature.

Men desire a good name ; they frequently wish, by the observance of what is upright and honest, to be regarded by their families and by their neighbors, as models of virtue. It is, however, only through the living water of Christ, that we may become really virtuous. Real virtue is that holy disposition of heart to do what is right from no other motive and for no other purpose, than because it is right—because we love the law of God. This disposition regulates our thoughts, elevates our feelings, determines our actions, and directs our minds constantly to the will of our Creator.

Men desire enjoyments, derived from social intercourse, from the beauties of nature, from art, from science, from the favor of fortune. But these are unsatisfying. From the living water of Christ flows that joy, which is an uninterrupted feeling of well-being, a feeling of security, of happiness, that can never end. Wherever the Christian places his foot, he steps on flowers. He has his secret festivals, of which the world knows nothing. He lives

on earth indeed, but carries heaven in his bosom. His days are sometimes gloomy, but a cheerful and friendly light shines into his bosom. This joy does not forsake the Christian even in the hour of affliction. It breathes in all his feelings and animates them. When the world around him trembles, Christ distils the water of heavenly peace on his heart. Should the earth sink beneath his feet and the heavens from above burst on his head, he would still rejoice in his Redeemer and exclaim, Dust may return to dust, my *soul* flies heavenward. What a joy is that of the Christian, who knows that God leads him, controls his destiny, forgives his sins for Christ's sake, and embraces him in the fulness of grace. O that every one of us may have this joy and cherish it in his bosom!

Men, finally, in every stage of their lives, and under all circumstances, hope and eagerly grasp at every gleam of hope. But many and cheering as are those hopes by which we overcome one difficulty after another, by which we climb from hill to hill, and by which we pass from point to point,—all these hopes are frail and vain without that hope, which is nourished by the living water of Christ—the hope, that Christ shall come, to reveal His glory and all those many mysteries of life, which now surround us like buds not yet opened; that Christ shall come to unite the past and the future in a single point, which shall be full of light and truth, without darkness or error, and shine on for-

ever. This is the hope, that when all other hopes forsake us, will stand by us, cheer our last gloomy moments, and plant the tree of life on the grave that imbosoms our remains.

One desire of men, however, I seem to have forgotten, the common and all-prevailing desire for riches. But what are riches and possessions? What is wealth and money? We enjoy them at most but till we die. Naked, poor, and helpless we enter this world, and naked, poor, and helpless we must part with it. Napoleon grasped at the four quarters of the globe, and his body now needs no more than six feet of soil to rest in; a golden crown rested on his head, but now only four weeping-willows overhang his grave with their spreading branches.

“This life’s not worth having with all it can give—
For something beyond it poor man sure must live.”

No one dies richer than another, unless he has drunk of the living water. He is rich in the grace of our Heavenly Father, in the love of the Son, and in the hope of salvation and everlasting blessedness.

We have seen the peculiar nature of this living water, and ask now: *where shall we find it?* For we too find it tedious to be constantly in need, to labor daily for the same wants, always to replace something that has been consumed, to repair what has been broken, to seek what has been lost, to fill what has been emptied; we too would like to drink of the living water and thirst no more. Where can we find it?

Not in the depths of the human mind, nor in the strength of our perceptions, nor in the magnitude of our talents, nor in the multitude of our natural gifts:—there we may often find buds, but rarely fruit. Neither can we find it in the studies of the philosopher, nor in the libraries of the learned, nor in the academies of science:—there much is sought for, but little is found. Neither can we find it in the calculations of prudence, nor in the fashions of life, nor in the merit of good works:—there there is much show, but little reality. Neither is it to be found on the tables of the rich, nor in the drinking-room of the debauchee, nor in the treasuries of kings:—there is frequently much feasting, but little enjoyment. We cannot find it on the face of the earth, nor in ourselves; we must look heavenward—to the love of Him, who has given us His Son. The life of Christ, His submission to the Father's will, His love with all His sufferings in our stead:—this is the living water, whose nature is so miraculous. Would you drink of it? Then receive the life of Christ in you; let Him reign in you; let Him influence your thoughts, your judgments, your life, your sufferings, and your will in all its determinations and resolutions. Let Him sustain you when you are afflicted, satisfy your wants when you are in need, and strengthen you when you are weak. Do not put off receiving Christ until you are old, until your energies are exhausted and the hour of adversity has come: but do like the pru-

dent citizen, who opens the well before his house in time, in order to have a supply of water when fire breaks out—receive Christ in your youth. Do not suffer one day to pass by without Christ; fill your heart with love to truth, to righteousness, and above all with gratitude, that He has suffered for you and redeemed you from sin.

And especially to you, my young friends, who are in the bloom of life, and many of whom have resolved to devote themselves to the Lord, I would say:—watch your opportunity of drinking from the fountain of living water. Your conscience may give you this opportunity, or the example and walk of bad men as well as of good men, or a word spoken undesignedly. The Lord may approach you in the beauty of nature, in the majestic sunrise, in the freshness of spring, or in the melancholy of autumn, or in His holy word. You may stand high or low, you may be sick or well, rich or poor, happy or unfortunate: the Lord will give every one of you his opportunity. Keep your eyes open, your judgment unbiassed, and seize it when, where, and under whatever form it may present itself. Perhaps you will be favored but *once* in your life with circumstances so favorable as to make it easy for you to embrace the Lord: if you suffer that time to pass by unimproved, you will lose what you will never be able to regain, neither by prayer, nor repentance, nor labor. Your youth will pass away, your strength will decrease, your eyes will become dim, your knees will

begin to totter, the sources of your sensual pleasure will dry up, your remembrance of the past will grow weak, and your head, like ripe fruit, will bend towards the grave. Take but one draught of the living water, and you will never grow old, but always feel young, cheerful, and strong, and your death will be like a slumber from which you shall awake only to see the glory of our Saviour and the abounding grace of our Heavenly Father. May God bless you and every one of us.

THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE AS A SERVANT.

JOHN 13 : 1-17.

“Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Then cometh He to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than He that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

TO-DAY I bring before your eyes a picture as lovely and attractive, as the history of our Lord on

earth exhibits anywhere; I intend to show you our dear Redeemer in his *greatest humility*. I will lead you to that sacred circle of saints, surrounding Christ shortly before the commencement of His great sufferings for our sins, and I will show you how Christ, full of love, and full of the most tender interest in the fate and success of His disciples after His death, and resurrection, and glorification, teaches them by deed, and not merely by words and doctrines, that of all qualities, humbleness is the most necessary for His ministers, and that it is the highest external sign of genuine love within.

We will consider : 1. The import of the passage I have read to you; 2. The occasion given for Christ washing the disciples' feet; 3. The symbolical meaning of the act.

THE IMPORT.—The nearer the day approached on which Christ was to expire on the cross, the stronger, the more fervent was His love to His disciples. The Saviour appears in this respect entirely like one of us, accessible to all the feelings of pain, of love, and of desire, only more pure and more heavenly. Thus He had a great desire once more and for the last time on this earth, to celebrate the Passover with His beloved disciples. Our Saviour was not a Stoic, and his going to the death of the cross was no Stoicism. He could sympathize with the beloved; He could weep with the mournful, and rejoice with the happy. With a prayer He

opens the meal; all lie around Him, and we naturally feel anxious to know what the conversation may have been in these last and precious moments. But see, *Christ rises!* What may He wish to do? He lays aside His garments, He takes a towel and girdeth Himself like a servant. Is He no longer the Lord, into whose hand the Father hath given all things, and who knows that He has come from God, and that He is going to God? Transfer yourselves for a moment into the situation of the disciples. They had frequently seen their Master act without uttering many words; they had seen Him in the greatest humility; they had seen Him among sinners, among the poor, among the lowest in rank. But now He appears before them, stripped of all glory, in the dress of a servant: how must their expectation have been raised? How much more must they have been astonished, when they saw Him commence washing their own feet? What mind is capable of comprehending such love, such humbleness, such mildness! See Him, to whom belong glory and honor, equal to that of the Father, bending down in love to His disciples and performing for them a service, disgusting in itself and belonging to the office of those only whom poverty and misfortune had pressed down to a condition of servitude. How sweet must it be to serve now, when He whom angels praise and adore, goes as a servant with water in His hand, from disciple to disciple, to wash their feet! How

sweet must it be now, to perform even the lowest of all services, when He, who is the greatest on earth and who has none beyond Him in Heaven, serves those in His love, who live and breathe only through Him. The heavens smile down on Him, the Father's eye rests with delight on Him; He knows that He comes from God and goes to God, and yet He makes Himself the lowest of all. As the light of the sun enlightens and warms all that lives through it, and does not withhold its reviving and blessed rays from any plant in nature, so does the love of Christ sink into the bosom of every one, in every condition and relation of life, and call forth into existence, *love, devotion, and happiness.*

THE OCCASION.—What gave the occasion for this humble action of Christ? The opinions of divines are divided on this question. Some say, that the disciples, though pious and faithful, though thoroughly acquainted with the dignity of their Master and the object of His dwelling among men, could nevertheless not altogether abandon the idea, that Christ would establish an earthly kingdom, and that in it He would distribute the different offices of the highest honor among His disciples. Hence it was necessary to dissipate these false hopes. But if such had been the case, would not the words of Christ, “That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22 : 30), have

had a tendency to strengthen their earthly and sensual hopes? And further: how cruel and selfish would it have been in the disciples, if in an hour so near the great sufferings of our Lord, they would have thought more of their own honor and glory, and *rank*, than of their kind and benignant Master! I confess, that I could neither love nor revere the disciples, if they were guilty of such a cruelty.

As we may infer from Luke, a contention had arisen among the disciples concerning their places at the table. As the stars are attracted by the sun, so was every disciple irresistibly drawn by Christ, and each one desired to sit nearest to his Master. The contention arose then from love, and we are inclined to excuse errors arising from such a source, for we think that love can never sin. The disciples, conscious of this, exhibited, perhaps, each one his superior claims to a seat nearest to the Saviour, and highest in Christ's kingdom. Love caused them to err, and by an act of love our Redeemer intended to correct their error; and teach them that hereafter no one should any longer consider himself superior to another, since the Master had made Himself the servant of His servants.

The view I have taken, will become more clear by looking at some of the individual characters, by which Christ was surrounded.

Our eye running over this holy circle, is first arrested by Judas. "The Devil having now put it into the heart of Judas, Simon's son, to betray

Him." John in relating this circumstance, intended, no doubt, to exhibit the love and humbleness of Christ in the most striking opposition to the daring arrogance of sin in Judas. "The Devil had put it into the heart of Judas." It was not merely a sinful thought that passed through his *mind*; bad thoughts may even sometimes fill the consciousness of the good and the pious, whose personality, however, not being affected, overcomes these thoughts by the power of prayer, as so many a beautiful legend tells us in the form of the most lovely poetry. But the Devil had put it into the *heart* of Judas. The heart is the centre of our personality; it is the fountain, from which come forth our inclinations and wishes, our desires and passions; this fountain being poisoned, all possibility of piety and salvation is destroyed; this fountain being in the power of Satan, hatred against the Lord must be *absolute, permanent, and unchangeable*. As Christ is the absolute love, so is Judas the absolute hatred; and as Christ saves the sinner by assuming his nature, so Judas, under the pretext of love, by a kiss, executes his sinful design, and draws what is holy and good, into the sphere of corruption and pollution. Never did the sun shine upon a spectacle like the one before us: Christ knows, that Judas will betray Him, but still He approaches him in love; Judas, with a heart full of hatred, quietly accepts this token of love, and thus hardens his heart more and more; for this is

the curse, inflicted on sin, that in its selfishness, it must convert even what is most pure, into its own nature ; this is the curse inflicted on sin, that one bad deed must beget another, and that the sinner enchains himself by a series of his own wicked deeds, each of which is but the consequence of the one which preceded it.

Let us turn our eyes away from this sight, and let us fix them upon him whom Christ loves, upon *John*. Though it is not said, with which disciple Christ commenced the washing of feet, it is likely that John received this sign of love first. He does not oppose Christ in what He is about to do ; he lives so entirely in his Saviour, his will is so entirely absorbed in that of his Master, that, like the star which seems to have no light of its own in the presence of the sun, he has *no* will before Christ, but suffers Him to dispose of his limbs as well as of his heart. O that we all were like John, and would never oppose Christ, when He desires to perform His work in us !

In Peter another instructive sight presents itself to us. I would like to give you this instruction in a few words : *Every virtue that proceeds from our own will, and not from the love of God in us and from love to God, is in the eye of Christ a vice.* The highest virtues of a Stoic or of an atheist are, according to Augustine, but so many splendid vices. Peter loves Christ ; his zeal for Him is unlimited ; but he is not yet delivered altogether

from his own will. The decided character of Peter rendered it difficult for Him to yield his will so to that of Christ, as if he had none of his own. In this instance, he is misled by a false modesty, a modesty that would still be praiseworthy, were not obedience to our Lord much more so. This is a great and a very important truth. *Love* does not accept anything, unless the love of God in man has effected and granted it; hence it is, that Christ does not accept the modesty of Peter. Peter seeing that he has done wrong, at once goes to the other extreme, exclaiming, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Thus the will of Peter yields indeed to Christ, but presents itself again in another peculiar aspect. Christ intends to wash His feet only, but Peter desires Him now to wash his hands and head too. This is the nature of self-will; you limit it on one side only that it may run on the other into the opposite extreme. And this is the dust of sin that still adheres to Peter's feet; though he is washed everywhere else, though he is regenerated, yet, unless Christ wash off this dust, Peter cannot have any part in His kingdom.

Having cast a glance upon Judas, upon John, and upon Peter, let us cast one likewise upon Christ Jesus Himself, who, in the midst of His disciples, is the centre, around which they all move. John, who so frequently calls Christ the *light of the world*, the *water*, and the *bread of life*, delights manifestly

in representing Him in his highest glory—in his greatest humility. Hence he adds the beautiful and most glorious words: “Knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God.” (v. 3.) No poetry, no richness of thought, nor of language, no fancy nor any imagination, could have plucked a finer laurel anywhere, to twine around the forehead of our blessed Saviour, than John did in these few and simple words. In the full consciousness of His highest glory and majesty, it is accordingly, that Christ descends into the most concealed depth of a Judas, and washes his feet; in this consciousness it is, that He enters into the condition of a servant, in order to raise our race up to Him. But such is the nature of love; it enters into the relations and condition of its object, and unites itself with it so entirely, that though still *two*, they nevertheless are but one.

THE SYMBOLICAL MEANING.—From the words, which Christ spoke to Peter: “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me,” it appears that the feet-washing of our Saviour was not a common one; else these words would have been too severe, too hard, for Peter. As Baptism is an external sign under which our spiritual regeneration is represented, and as this spiritual meaning of baptism can only be understood by the spiritual man, and not by him, who perceives merely the water, so likewise has

the feet-washing of our Saviour a symbolical meaning, which is intelligible only to the spirit within us. Whilst Baptism is the sign of our general regeneration, feet-washing is the sign by which the mistakes, errors, and sins, to which even the most pious among us are still exposed, are represented as forgiven and pardoned by the immeasurable love of Christ. Such an assurance the disciples of Christ, who were soon to be separated from Him on earth, were especially in need of, lest their smaller errors would have caused them to be discouraged in their great undertaking. *Daily* we sin, and *daily* do we stand in need of that love, which alone can wash away the sins, which like the dust on our feet, rests on our conscience. But bear in mind, that it is Peter and not Judas, upon whom feet-washing has this effect; little will therefore depend upon the fact, whether we perform this ceremony daily upon ourselves and our friends, or not, if we only have the *spirit* with which it was performed by our Lord. The performance itself is unnecessary, since we do not find it introduced, like Baptism or the Lord's Supper, into the Apostolical Church, and since climatic differences and our sexual relations would render its performance in our situation almost impossible, at least highly improper.

May, therefore, in the place of merely external forms and ceremonies, that spirit descend upon us, which renders the great humble, and the humble great; may our small circle be devoted to the Lord,

as the disciples were; may each one of us love, admire, and imitate our great Master. Like John, may every one of us say, Here are my thoughts, O Lord! reign in them; here are my senses, sanctify them; here is my will, make it thine own; here are the members of my body, dispose of them. Here is my life, extend it or shorten it, call me away to-day, or to-morrow, only grant that I may live to Thee and die in Thy name, my dear Saviour! Especially may all of you, who intend to become ministers of Christ Jesus, be humble, and be the servants of every one, for Christ's sake, on every occasion, in every proper way, and with all your power, until death. Amen.

THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE BEARING HIS CROSS.

JOHN 19 : 16-18.

“ Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified, and they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha : where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.”

How would we feel if we had never heard of a suffering Redeemer, if we had never read of Him, and He were now for the first time to be named to us ?

When we were yet children, we were led to Golgotha : then already we received some impressions, though we had no measure by which to estimate the height and depth of such sufferings.

Afterwards Christ was often represented to us ; we grew in knowledge ; but the first impression which we received of Christ in our earliest childhood, and upon which so much depends, was not deep enough. It is perhaps on this account, that we were never so deeply moved, never so entirely absorbed in grief by looking upon our Saviour's sufferings, as we often are in common life, when losing a brother, or a kind parent, or a friend.

What once is past, we can not redeem. That *first* impression, of which I speak, we can not recall. But to-day we will endeavor *to receive a full impression of the mournful walk of our Saviour bearing his cross to Golgotha.* For this purpose, let all earthly wishes and desires be silent in our breasts; let us forget the world and its vanity, and enter into meditation. Let us imagine that we see around us Gethsemane and Golgotha; and let us walk by the side of our Lord when He carries the cross.

May the Lord sanctify our hearts, grant our desires, and fill us with faith and holy love. Amen.

Our text does not contain many words. But when I read them, it seems to me as if I were standing on a mountain, the surface of which is poor and barren, but whose bowels are filled with beautiful and shining gold. Light we need to enter mines; and faith we need to understand the secret counsels of God, and to see the beauty and the depth of words, that externally look sterile. I shall enter into the particulars of my text, and ask you to follow me in love and in patience.

AND THEY TOOK JESUS.—Here already we must stop and ask: *Who* is He whom they took?

Man is created to live. But a man may forfeit his noble destiny by the commission of crimes, and his fellow-men may deem it right and expedient

for their own safety to hurry him away from the face of the earth into the shades of death. The thought is an awful one, and we tremble whenever it is realized in a fellow-being.

When, however, one who is *innocent* falls a victim to mere suspicion; when some noble one is sacrificed to a spirit of persecution; when one is so unfortunate as to surpass the genius of his age and to be led to death by an erroneous opinion or by the malice of his contemporaries, like a Huss, we are struck with fear and terror.

And who was He whom they took? He was Christ, promised by the Word of God, for whom all ages had been hoping and praying; He was the Saviour of the human race and the Son of God, through whom the Father was pleased to take pity on His fallen children. He, the most pure and holy, is condemned by the most impure and unholy. The Lord of Heaven is sentenced to death by the creatures of the dust. Love is sacrificed by hatred. The blessings which He bestowed are reciprocated by scorn, by reproach and contempt, and by the infliction of pain. "But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him." They slew the only son.

THEY TOOK JESUS.—Who were *they*? *Who* took Him? Who slew Him?

The accusers and witnesses, the judge and the

servants—all were alike. No one had a heart to feel, no one the nobleness to venture anything for an innocent man, for the Son of God.

And now He is delivered over into the hands, of the Romans. *Roman* soldiers receive Him and execute the sentence given by a Roman judge. Thus He is in the hands of *heathen*, as if the Jews were no longer worthy to have Him, who was theirs by prophecy and by birth. They have succeeded in thrusting Him out among men, who were strangers to true dignity; whose dark bosoms were shut against the entrance of any light; whose hands were as rough as the sword which they were accustomed to handle; and who, hardened by the constant sight of misery and injustice, had sunk so low as to be the vile servants of tyranny, and were without mercy, and without feeling.

And they took Jesus, AND LED HIM AWAY. The court-house was in the eastern part of the city, towards the Mount of Olives; the place of execution was in the west, before the gate. The way is said to have been at least a mile long, and to have extended through nearly the whole breadth of the city. It was expressively called the Street of Grief or of pain. And even yet, after two thousand years have almost passed by, pious pilgrims may see the ruins of Pilate's palace, the place where Simon took the cross, and the region where the women stood, weeping over the Lord.

With what feelings did our Saviour walk through this street! Through those streets He had to go, in which His voice had so often been heard, proclaiming salvation; where He had so often wrought miracles; where He had scattered so many mercies around Him; and where His name had so often been praised by those whom He had blessed.

What must have been His feelings when He passed by the temple, which He had rendered holy by His preaching, and which He had consecrated as the prototype of the future kingdom of God? The evening before the Jews celebrate the feast of their deliverance, He who had come to deliver them effectually and forever, is led to the death of the cross. He shall not be in the midst of them, when they enjoy their feast—He who alone could have changed their days of festivity into days of eternal joy. What pain and sadness must Christ have felt under such reflections!

How must He have felt when He went forth into Golgotha, and all that were in Jerusalem turned their eyes upon Him, as upon a criminal, though He was Jesus Christ, our Anointed Redeemer. Jesus He was, who had given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and who had called the dead back to life again; Jesus He was, who had been listened to the day before with enthusiasm, and whom but a short time before the multitude had saluted with a loud Hosanna. Now they are silent. Their applause has been changed into reproach;

their admiration into scorn; their confidence into despair. And yet He was even then Jesus, as great as He ever was before.

AND HE BEARING HIS CROSS went forth. Whoever was condemned to die the death of the cross, had to carry it, not indeed the whole of it, but only its fork or cross-piece, which was to be fastened to the upright beam, already fixed in its place. Jesus, also, the Saviour of men, bending down under an unworthy burden, carries the accursed wood.

But strength forsakes Him. He cannot walk any further under the load. Simon, a Lybian, a native of Cyrene, where many thousands of Jews lived, all of whom were accustomed to go to their synagogues in Jerusalem, meets them. Perhaps he looked with pity on our bleeding, exhausted Saviour. A tear perhaps was visible in his eye. Perhaps he was suspected of following Christ, for he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, who were afterwards converted. Whether they compelled him to bear the cross, because he happened to be nearest to them, or because he manifested compassion towards the Lord, or because he was supposed to love Him, is not known to us. But this we do know, that although the Saviour bore our sins and the sin of the world, we must nevertheless *with Him* carry the cross. We must take His cross and walk with Him to Golgotha; we must die with Him and be buried with Him, be-

fore we can rise with Him. What Simon did in reality, we must do in spirit, and in faith.

The cross is the banner, which all nations and every individual must approach. The cross attracts them: it attracted Simon also. But the path to the cross of Christ, and to the life flowing from it, leads through the crucifixion of our own sins. Whoever can understand this, will lose his life for Christ's sake, that he may find it anew in Him.

WHERE THEY CRUCIFIED HIM.—Death by crucifixion, was the most painful of all deaths. The unfortunate victim, whose sinews were extended in the most unnatural manner, was consumed by the slow fire of a fever; and whilst agonizing and withering in the air, he might sigh and groan for days before the last moment came. The cross itself was not very high; though modern artists may represent it so. Not far from the ground, there was a projection in the principal beam, on which the feet were allowed to rest. Before the sufferer was raised up, a drink was handed to him. This drink, consisting of wine and other ingredients, was intoxicating, and designed to blunt the stings of pain and weaken the consciousness. Such a drink of sour wine and wormwood, was offered also to Christ, but He did not accept of it. He did not wish to weaken His consciousness of the pains of death; His drink and His meat was to do the will of His Father.

After this drink had been given, it was customary

to undress the victim, fasten his arms to the cross-piece by a rope, and then nail him to it. Sometimes the feet were also nailed fast, at other times not. How Christ was dealt with in this respect, is not known.

But from beginning to end, what *torture!* What a series of pains! What a gradual increase of misery! It is not a death that takes away life by a single blow, but an infliction of pain, that now attacks the victim and then partly releases him, to attack him again and again, until by degrees it penetrates every nerve and every muscle, and the poor sufferer expires from exhaustion.

AND TWO OTHERS WITH HIM, ON EITHER SIDE ONE, AND JESUS IN THE MIDST.—At the time of Christ, Judea was filled with criminals, who were frequently collected into a band, and called themselves the liberators of Israel. They were often led by one who feigned to be the Messiah, and by means of pretended miracles sometimes induced even pious persons to join him. To such a band perhaps both the criminals belonged who were crucified with Christ. Yet their disposition was very different. The one was no doubt led astray by mistaken views of right and wrong, by the urgency of relations, and by the conjunction of many circumstances. The other was a villain. Between these, however, Christ had to die. He whom angels had introduced into the world with rejoicing, and whom

the wise men of the East had saluted with their precious gifts; He, who was the King of kings, must depart from this life among robbers. He who reigned as Prophet and as King—who had unlimited command of the powers of nature—who subdued the storm and walked upon the waves of the sea—who fed thousands with a few loaves of bread—who cured the sick and expelled evil spirits—He hangs between two murderers, as if He were the worst sinner among them.

AND TWO OTHERS WITH HIM.—*Why* was this? Why had Christ to die between two malefactors?

Those who are satisfied with transferring a difficulty from one place to another, we hear saying, The Scriptures had to be fulfilled. But the same Providence spoke through the Prophets in the Old Testament, that executed its predictions through the Jews and the Romans in the New Testament; and if there was a design in fulfilling the prophecies, there must have been one also in giving them.

The few words I shall say on this subject, I introduce with a general remark. We are all in the power of God; we must all serve Him, some *with* and others *against* our wills. But the latter are God's slaves; the former are His children. The slaves of God, without knowing what they do, work out a significant symbol, which suggests to us many instructive reflections. Such a symbol we have in this place.

In the wickedness of their hearts and from malice, His enemies hang Christ between two criminals, and thus intend to insult Him, whose disciples were now dispersed, whom Judas had betrayed and Peter had denied, and against whom the people raged. But whilst they wish still more to wound His wounded breast, they are preparing a healing balm for Him. Faith which had disappeared among His own disciples, shows itself in a robber. When no one can believe that the pierced right arm of Christ is strong enough to lead a soul through the dark valley of death, when all give up in despair, thinking that He who dies the death of a criminal cannot open the gates of Heaven—a robber comes forth, a hero in faith, and bears witness that Christ has come to save sinners.

Again: The robbers were sinners, and sinners we all are. They did but represent our race. Thus Christ hangs between the representatives of mankind. But only one of these sinners repents; the other reviles Christ. And thus it is with us. Some of us believe, others reject Christ. Jesus, on the cross, receives the thief that believes; He passes judgment. Thus the cross, intended for His reproach and destruction, becomes the throne on which the Judge of mankind is seated: Golgotha becomes the seat of judgment. In like manner, will our race on that great day be divided into two parts, as its representatives on Golgotha. On the one side of

Christ those will stand that are saved, and on the other those that are condemned.

Again: They crown Him with thorns. The thorns are only the symbols of those pains which this sinful earth, the mother of thorns, had prepared for Him. Thus, through a crown of thorns, His enemies confess symbolically, without knowing or willing it, what sorrows Christ had to endure, in order to save us from sin and give us life eternal.

Again: His arms are extended on the cross; they who hate Him have nailed them so. But love is stronger than hatred. Christ Himself willingly stretched out His arms on the cross to embrace the whole world in His love, and to call down from Golgotha to all nations, to come to the cross, to unite under it, and fall into the arms of a kind and merciful Saviour.

Thus every mark of infamy which the enemies of Christ put upon Him, is converted into glory; they do what they will not; and what they will they are too weak to do.

One truth, then, we may learn from the latter part of our discussion. It is this:

There is but one true glory, and there is but one kind of real ignominy. That ignominy is sin. That glory is faith, and a life of faith averse to sin. Ignominy can not be covered nor concealed with all the tokens of honor which earth may confer; true glory can not be diminished by any acts of hatred or of envy; but every attempt to tarnish it,

only increases its brilliancy. If you give yourselves to the service of sin, you cannot escape shame and destruction, for should you take wings and dwell in the uttermost parts of the ocean, there also would His eye be upon you. But if you devote yourselves to the service of God, true glory and everlasting life will be yours. The crown of thorns becomes a crown of life on the head of our Saviour. His cross becomes His throne. Thus will it be also with all the sufferings and reproaches of those who love the Lord; they will be converted into joy and honor.

But in order to obtain true glory, you must pray to God. You must sing praises to Him, who died for you. You must seize the blessings which the cross offers. You must go to the Redeemer. Go then to Him and say : Here I am, Lord, and here is my life : speak, and I will hear : give me a sign, and I will hasten to obey : delay, and I will wait in patience : try me, and I will submit : smite me, and I will endure it in faith : I will look to Thee : I will approach Thy cross and learn patience, forbearance, and meekness : I will resist evil, as Thou hast done it : I will conquer by Thy Spirit, that I may receive the crown of everlasting life.

Go to the Lord and speak thus to Him. Sweet will be your sleep, and still sweeter your death. See the poor laborer : he returns home from the field ; the day was hot and long, and hard was his toil ; he seats himself before his door to enjoy the

cool evening; he looks upon the sky and upon the beautiful clouds that accompany the sun as he sinks down to rest; then he forgets his labor and his fatigue, and his mind is absorbed in the beauties of the sunset.

So it will be with the Christian. On the evening of his life he will return home to his Father, and, seated before the throne of God, he will look upon eternity, and forget that he ever was out in the field, which is the earth, to labor and struggle there, to be unhappy and worn down with fatigue. God grant that such may be the evening of our life. Amen!

THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER LIFE ON THE CROSS.

JOHN 19 : 19-24.

“And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews : for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city ; and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priest of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, the King of the Jews ; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also his coat : now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be : that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.”

WHENEVER we reflect on the moral value of an action, we ask above all, whether the actor was free or not ; whether he was forced by any physical or supernatural power ? In the latter case the guilt or merit, that may be attached to the action, belongs to the forcing power acting through man only as through an instrument. He who acts, must have freely resolved to act just as he acted, if the action is justly to be imputed to him. Every resolution, however, presupposes deliberation, and

all deliberation a possibility that he who deliberates, may act thus or so, that he is not forced to act, neither by anything within him nor by anything from without. The deliberation itself, if it be not trifling, ought not only to take into consideration all the possible means by which to accomplish a purpose and to select the best ones among them, but it ought, above all, to consider the moral value of the action and its possible consequences. The result of such deliberation we call *resolution*; and that which prompts the resolution, *the motive*. The motive entering the action, becomes its soul and constitutes its value, our guilt or our virtue.

Every man belongs to that moral order, which, constituted by the divine law, is independent of every individual and has power over every individual. Every action affects this order, either by improving or by deteriorating it; but affecting this order, an action is in turn affected by it. This mutual effect we call the *consequences* of our actions. To calculate these consequences, forms a part of our deliberation; but that we may do this with safety, we must know all the circumstances under which we act. If we mistake them or if we overlook some of them, the action, when realized, may possess *qualities*, which it had not, whilst yet existing only in our mind—in our deliberations. Something foreign, which we did not foresee, is attached to it; the opposite of what we design, is realized through it. Free in planning an action, we

have no more control over it when once executed ; but from the moment when it enters this moral order, it places us under a necessity proceeding from it, and we must take the fruit it bears.

Shortsighted as we are, we call this, that an action may produce the opposite of what we designed by it, a *mystery*. And a mystery to us indeed it is, but in reality it is the Providence of God, that makes even our wicked designs serve His plans, and brings forth good where man meditated only evil. This secret and mysterious way of God's Providence, I propose to consider to-day.

Our text says : And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was : Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This was the inscription on the cross. The law required, that the name of the criminal and his crime be made known. The world, governed by moral principles, insists on knowing who is punished, and for what crime, lest the judge may become a tyrant. Very much had been spoken of the execution of Christ, both for and against it ; hence we see on the cross of Jesus the same inscription in *three* different languages ;—in Hebrew, for the Jews who lived in Jerusalem ; in Greek, for the Jews who lived dispersed throughout other countries, but were at this time assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast ; in Latin, on account of the

Romans who were present. So then, our Saviour was treated like a common criminal in every respect. There shall be no heart to pity Him, but every one shall condemn Him. Every trace of respect, of applause, of attachment, they desire to efface. His memory they intend to stigmatize, to curse His name, to annihilate His work, to destroy His life. This is the plan of the world.

But let us see, what was the plan of God? He whom they execute as a criminal, shall come forth gloriously as the Messiah of the world. This was the plan of God, and the wicked Judges and Jews had to bear a painful disappointment; whilst they thought to reach their designs, they were only engaged in fulfilling the counsel of His infinite wisdom; whilst they wished to destroy the power of Christ by taking His life, they were laying the foundation of His divine revelation. Had Christ not been crucified, the kingdom of truth and of love would never have been established on earth. He died, not because He *could not* shun the malice of the Jews, but that He might reconcile the world to God; and the Father makes use of their arm to slay Him whose pure and innocent blood was to be the ransom for our sins. Now the sinner is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Those that sit in darkness are brought out of the prison-house. All things have become new. There is no more debt. The Father smiles again; and the Son calls: Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends

of the earth. Now the words, written in scorn on the cross, lighten as if they were written with the shining rays of the rising sun, and proclaim loudly : He whom they have crucified *was* the King of the Jews—the Messiah of the world—the Son of God. His death passes as the breath of life through all nations and ages. His lips, though pale and closed, proclaim peace and salvation unto man !

What may we learn from this part of our discourse ? God's ways are dark, but they lead to glory. God permits what is awful, but makes it harmonize with His plan. He is the Almighty, and as, by the beams of the sun, He changes the dark cloud, that threatens destruction, into a beautiful rainbow, the arch, that connects time and eternity, heaven and earth, so He may turn all apparent evil into good. Therefore dismiss your doubts ; do not resist the will of God ; do not murmur ; for the Father guides you, and the Son loves you. But to possess this tranquillity of mind you must look upon the cross, you must feel yourself attracted by it.

LET US CAST A GLANCE AT THE PRIESTS.

If we reflect upon the conduct of the priests, from the beginning to the end, we must come to the conclusion, that they acted from hatred to Christ. They took Him captive, not because He appeared to them to deserve punishment, for they had to bribe their witnesses. They arraigned Him

before the Sanhedrim, not to judge Him according to law; for they were fully determined to pronounce Him guilty. They handed Him over to Pilate, not that He might be acquitted or condemned according to his deserts, but that he might be led to Golgotha. The motive of their conduct is hatred, their war-cry, Crucify Him! And why did they hate Him? They could not comprehend Him; He was too noble, too divine, for that sensual race; they had no heart to feel with Him; they were too proud to learn of Him; they were too degenerate to form an attachment to Him. But whoever is not with Him, is against Him. Whoever does not work for Him, must work against Him. Christ, moreover, had often humbled them. He had taken away from them the attention of the people. Hence they seek an opportunity to vent their rage—to glut their hatred. Hence they exult, when they see Him going forth bearing the cross. Hence they follow Him triumphing. Though the way was long, the anticipated satisfaction is sweet.

But what first strikes their eye? *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*. What a disappointment! They came to triumph over Christ, but they are humbled by a few words; their pride is wounded, their arrogance is shaken. *The King of the Jews*: and who were the Priests? Jews themselves. They had brought about the crucifixion of Him, whom the cross declares to be their King.

As murderers of their own King, they stood before the cross, not as holy priests, who had accused a fanatic or the instigator of a revolution. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou killest thy prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee." There they stand. A little tablet pronounces judgment upon them. The anticipated satisfaction is changed into bitter disappointment. As an arrow directed against an enemy, rebounds and wounds the breast of the archer; as a lie, spoken to injure another, brings shame upon him that uttered it;—so their desire to wound Christ, to the utmost, results in their own reproach and shame.

What may we learn from the second part of our discussion?—That the judgment of God is secret, but awful; that He gives room to the criminal, yet forces the consciousness of his guilt upon him. A little tablet or an innocent word, the rustling of a leaf, or the apparition of a ghost, may remind him of his guilt. Though the chariot, in which God the Almighty rides invisibly over the face of the earth, over the heads of men, over the ocean of time, is unseen, still every vibration and revolution of the wheels teach us, that God is indeed merciful, but also just; that He does not desire the death of the sinner, but that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. He who misunderstands this doctrine is judged already.

O that it may be the lot of our life, to preserve purity in our thoughts, innocence in our words, holi-

ness in our deeds, and a heart that overflows with faith and love.

LET US TURN OUR ATTENTION TO PILATE.—It was his duty to honor the truth and deal out justice, whenever it had been violated. But he was a weak man, without decision of character, rising and sinking with those relations that surrounded him. He finds no fault in Christ, and yet condemns Him. He dislikes the accusers, but fears the ground on which they argue with him. He desires to avenge himself for the vexatious necessity of yielding to them, but he is not man enough to do it in an open way; he only dares to provoke them. Christ is to him nothing more than an imaginary King; but as if, in his opinion, just such a king, a king on the cross, would suit the Jews, he wrote the title on the tablet: *The King of the Jews*. Those for whom he had invented the mockery, feel it. They say, therefore, "Write not the King of the Jews, but that he said, I am King of the Jews." But Pilate, like a man that has power, answers their request simply by saying, *What I have written, I have written*.

From weakness, and because he was the slave of this weakness, Pilate had written, what he had written; but what he wrote in malice, was the truth; and without knowing or willing it, he becomes the hero that announces this truth. What he disbelieves, he must confirm. What he cannot conceive, he announces publicly. What he scoffs

at, he is forced to make known. He mocks himself, whilst he intends to mock the Jews.

What may we learn from the third part of our discussion? That though God limits the liberty and free will of no one, He nevertheless governs every one in all his actions. This indeed is a mystery: God created His children for liberty; still His counsels and plans take their actions into account. The evil and the good must both serve Him. His is the first-born, and His are the murderers of Christ. The mystery, however, disappears, when we make the Father's will our own. The sinner lives in darkness, acts in darkness, and dies in darkness; he is surrounded by mysterious secrets. The man of faith lives in light. Everything in existence has its peculiar nature. It is the nature of fire to burn; of wind to blow; and of water to moisten. The nature of freedom is light, obtained by truth proceeding from faith.

He is a freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside.

LET US YET LOOK FOR A MOMENT UPON THE SOLDIERS. It was an established custom, that the dress of the executed victim fall into the hands of the executioners. The soldiers under the cross of Christ, do therefore, what they were accustomed to do, without any particular design. They first distribute among each other the upper garment. It consisted of a square piece of cloth, and was therefore easily

divided into four parts. But the case was different with the coat; this was without seam, woven from the top throughout, after the manner of the Galileans. To cut it into four parts would have spoiled it, and made it useless. For this reason they agree to cast lots, to decide thus, who shall be so happy as to have it. We see the soldiers act without any particular design.

But we ask, what was and is the symbolical meaning of their action?

Before answering this question I must indulge in one general remark. To the eye of the spiritual man everything, even apparently the most insignificant, gains importance and meaning. He sees a Divine Providence and a wise plan in the history of the world, as well as in the Word of God; he sees a higher power manifesting itself in the innocent play of a little child, as well as in the deeds of nations. He reads the glory of God in the flower of the field, as well as in the millions of stars in the sky. His genius recognizes in the visible creation that which is invisible, and discovers an animating soul in all the forms of earth. It is otherwise with the merely sensual man. For him nothing has a symbolical meaning, not even the altar of our Lord, nor the bread on it, nor the wine. He sees nothing but what is on the surface, what can be touched with his fingers, or heard with his ear, or seen with his eye.

In asking: What is the symbolical meaning of

the action which the soldiers undesignedly performed? we think first of all of the Psalm: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (22: 18). Thus the Scripture was fulfilled. But this is not all. The earthly heritage of our Lord reminds us naturally of the heavenly treasure which He leaves to His friends. The little property of Him who hath not where to lay His head, points to the riches which we have inherited through Him. They divided the upper garment into *four* parts, and there are four divisions of the world, which are destined to inherit the Lord's kingdom. *They cast lots.* The lot leaves the decision of a thing to *chance*. In chance, however, there is something mysterious. Its result is thus, but it might also be otherwise. Why is it not otherwise? This question contains the mystery. And secret and mysterious is the counsel of God, that calls some earlier and others later into the communion of the saints.

Again: The upper garment the soldiers could divide; but the coat, made of one piece, without seam, woven from the top throughout, they could not cut into pieces. This beautiful and lovely picture points to the internal history of the Church. The upper garment is the *external* form, in which one denomination differs from the other: this can be torn into pieces. The coat points to the Spirit of Christ; this cannot be torn into pieces, but every one must have it whole and entire. That by which

different Christian denominations are separated from each other, is of comparatively little importance, the mere external form; but that by which they are still united, and in virtue of which they are all called *Christians*, is *one* spirit, *one* faith, *one* love, and *one* hope. Differing in form and points of minor importance, we must be united in spirit, or else we cannot be Christians.

What may we learn from the last part of this sermon? We must embrace Christ entirely or not at all. We must be convinced that the Saviour of the world is the Son of God, and that only the Son of God can be the Saviour of the world. We must be convinced that all the light which can illumine our life, all the power which can purify our sinful nature, all the consolation which can support us in our need, and all the blessings of which we can partake in time and eternity, proceed from Christ alone. We must believe that there is no other gate leading to Heaven, but the cross of Christ. His Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, must reveal to us our destination here on Earth; it must give us the security of our salvation in Heaven. What our duty is, we can know only through Christ. He must satisfy our wants, govern our thoughts, and determine us in our relations and conduct.

But notice, my friends, what necessarily follows from this. If Christ is entirely *ours*, we must be entirely *His*. If Christ is our property, our will must be His property, with its whole activity. Is

Christ ours, then our heart, our love, our joy, our peace, our patience, our cheerfulness, our humility, our meekness, and our purity, must be His. If He is ours, He will make us humble in prosperity, unconquerable in adversity; He will teach us to live in the feeling, that whilst we die daily, we die in the sure hope that we are not of this world, but that our destiny is *immortality*.

This is the Spirit of Christ, which cannot be torn into pieces, and which every one must have who is a Christian; not, indeed, in the same manner and in the same form; for as different as the dispositions and relations of men are, so different will be the forms under which Christ is ours. There are perhaps not two among us here, to whom Christ is exactly the same, but to every one He may reveal Himself fully, according to his talents, disposition, and situation. There are diversities of operations, but one end and one Spirit. Like the many branches of a tree, each reaching in a different direction, but all growing forth from one trunk, and bending back towards it, thus forming the crown, the ornament of the tree—is the Church of Christ; there are many branches, but one bond—many members, but one body—many forms, but one soul.

May God grant us such a faith in all our relations—when our life blooms, and when its leaves withering fall to the ground—when that hour approaches, which we do not see but still fear, the hour of death.

THE LOVE OF THE INNER LIFE.

JOHN 19 : 25-27.

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”

EVERYTHING created by God, has an existence peculiar to itself. Air, fire, water, the plant, and the animal. Each *is* and *exists*, but no one thing is, or exists, like another. Man also has an existence peculiar to himself, and differing from that of all nature around him. According to his body, he exists like the animal, eats and drinks, sleeps and wakes, blooms and fades, dies and decays. But according to his spirit, he lives in a different sphere from that of mere desire and sensual wants. The life of the spirit is love. Without love, we are spiritually dead.

But not all love is pure and elevating. Pure love is the inclination for something higher than we are ourselves, or possess in ourselves; it is a longing after union with God, a longing to remove the barrier between us and God, and to be reconciled to Him through the redemption of our Lord Jesus

Christ. Such love must be kindled in us by the love of Christ, and by the agency of the Holy Spirit. In order to exhibit more strikingly the contrast between the love of the worldling and that of the Christian, I have chosen the words which you will find in the 19th chapter of the Goospel by St. John, from the 25th to the 27th verse: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

In the first place, let us consider the *strength* of Christian love.

The love of the worldling frequently consists not in strength, but in vain imaginations, and in empty expressions of affection. It is rich in words, but poor in deeds; it is ready with the tongue, but slow in redeeming its pledges. The love of Christ, and also that of His true followers, is diametrically opposed to it in every particular. See our Saviour stretched on the cross. It was love which prompted Him to give Himself a ransom for our sins; to suffer for us in a measure which we cannot comprehend. It was love which prompted the desire, that the sinner might become just by His blood, that the slave

might be made free, that the poor might become heirs of Heaven, that all things might become new, that there might be no more fear, and that the Father's face might smile upon us again. Whilst agonizing in pain, his last sigh is : "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." His last breath testifies to His undying love, which sends into the breast of every true believer the words of peace, "Spend not your days in fear, nor your nights in sighing, but hope and rejoice."

The same love, we may discover, in the true followers of Christ. Transfer yourselves for a moment to Calvary. See the skulls scattered about; hear the whispered revilings of Christ; notice the frightful priests and their malignant eyes, as they watch the cross; and then, behold the women, standing beneath their dying Saviour. Delicate and tender as is the nature of woman, shrinking as she does from public exposure to the insults of a promiscuous and disorderly multitude, how *strong* must have been the attachment that could rivet them to the spot, where their divine Master was expiring under His accumulated sufferings! This is the time when a sword was to pierce through their souls, a time dark and gloomy, and full of danger for those who publicly professed their love to the Saviour. But love, strong as theirs, subjects itself to every pain and to every duty without hesitation. *They* cannot endure absence from their crucified Redeemer; though they cannot assist Him, they

must nevertheless be with Him. True Christian love knows of no place of peace or pleasure away from its divine Master.

How different is the love of the world! It always rests upon the lip, but its fountain is not the heart; when put to the test, a thousand excuses present themselves to render its expression in corresponding actions impossible. Deceiving itself, it deceives others for a time, for man in the darkness of nature is the slave of selfishness, and acts wholly under its control.

Christian love *never changes*. It is not like the rosy morn, that grows pale before the heat of the day; it is not like varnish, that may be rubbed off by the hand of time; it is no tinsel, that the wind may blow away. But like pure and solid gold, the more it is put to the test the brighter it shines. How many changes had taken place in the life of our Redeemer, yet His mother does not forsake Him; Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene, and the beloved disciple, stand near Him. No misfortune can sever the ties that unite them; whilst circumstances change, their love remains the same. It was easy indeed for the women to love, when the future smiled like a blooming day; when the glory of Christ passed from mouth to mouth, and from land to land; but whither has it fled, this season of happiness? On the cross of reproach, no honor blooms; no sun of joy shines on Golgotha; for the worldling, Christ no longer possesses any at-

traction. Death approaches Him, and the multitude that but a few days ago applauded Him, now scoff at Him; but the love of the women increases in strength and energy, in proportion as life becomes darker, its claims higher, and its calls louder.

How different is the love of the world! It is the ornament of the first few days of a connection, but it does not continue to cheer the whole life. It depends on circumstances—rises and sinks with them. This love blesses those who are near, but forgets those at a distance; it willingly partakes of our joys, but shrinks from sharing our adversities; it carries the living in its bosom, but is unwilling to remember those with mourning and gratitude, who have gone to the grave. True Christian love is strongest when worldly love is weakest, in *misfortunes* and in the *troubles* of life.

Again: The strength of Christian love may be seen in its immortality. Death may separate hands that clasp each other; hearts it cannot sever. Death may force friends to part with friends, but the living may still gather around the graves of the deceased, and the spirit of the deceased may still abide with those who survive; may speak to them in what they have done for them, in the example they have set, and in the care they have taken of them. Thus also the love of the women retains its energy, even after the death of Christ. As they stood near the cross, speechless in their grief and unable to relieve the tortures of their Saviour, or to comfort Him, so

they followed Him to the sepulchre in which He was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment. Now, upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. What joy must even the Son of God have felt, when He, the all-seeing One, read distinctly in their hearts what their lips did not utter, that their love would go beyond death!

Such love is unknown to the world. Their love is based on sand, and endures like a rope of sand. Its alliances are formed from self-interest; its choices are determined by sensual attractions; its connections are entered into for pleasure and for usefulness. It considers friends valuable only for their beauty or talents; for their gracefulness or their fitness for certain purposes; hence it is vain and transient and void. Christian love is based on what is eternal, and will therefore endure to eternity. It considers all tender and good feelings sacred; all its duties inviolable; all its relations as formed for *higher designs*. Such love does not merely desire friends, to eat and to drink with them; to deal and to live with them—but friends who adore the same Lord, who walk in the same faith, strive after the same holiness, and rejoice in the same hope. Friends, united by such love, consider themselves the fellow-heirs of Christ; they regard each other thus while they live, honor each

other thus when they suffer, and resign each other thus when they die. Such is the strength of Christian love.

Let us now consider the *confidence* of Christian love.

It is easy to say: Love believes all things, but it is difficult to do accordingly; for we are prone to distrust and suspicion. Christian love, however, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things; and such was the love of the women beneath the cross. We have been taught from our childhood, that to save us from sin and eternal damnation, it was necessary that Christ should die; that His blood was the sacrifice for our guilt, and that His obedience and righteousness are now imputed to us. For as by one man sin and misery had come into the world, and as sin was imputed to all men, so through the death of Christ came life and salvation. But this eternal and ever-blessed truth was a mystery to the women; it was yet to be fully revealed by the Holy Spirit. When, now, Christ became a curse for us; when He in whom they believed as the Son of God, was thus humbled and so despised that men hid their faces from Him, and preferred a murderer; when He became subject to bitterest wrath, and, denounced as a blasphemer and a false Christ, was nailed to the cross by the hands of heathen, like a criminal,—then it required confidence, on the part of the women, to avow their former attachment. They had not ex-

pected Christ to establish a temporal kingdom, but that He would restore an eternal kingdom. A Saviour on the cross, however—salvation and life through the *death* of Him who gives it—this they could not comprehend. Whilst they stand beneath the cross, they stand, it cannot be denied, on the ruins of their hopes. No words to console them, are heard from the lips of the expiring Saviour, surrounded by the darkness of death. He whose glory is clouded, whom men have rejected, whom God seems to have forsaken, makes no effort to explain to them the necessity of all this, and of His death. He gives them no promise that the present darkness shall be changed into light, and yet their confidence remains unshaken. The Saviour dies; and because He did not shun death, they are convinced that it is necessary He should die. No doubts rise in their breasts, or if there be any, they put them under the obedience of love. They have more of Christ in their hearts, than what they can see of Him with their eyes. The mystery must be solved; the time must come, when they shall see clearly what now is concealed from their eyes:—this is their hope, this is their faith.

O that all of us may possess such a confidence, such a hope in our Redeemer! That all of us may confide in Him, whether fortune smiles or frowns upon us—whether we can understand the sufferings laid upon us by Providence, or the ways of God are mysterious and dark to us.

The confidence of Christian love may be seen also from the following consideration. The love of the world grows cold when it is burdened with labor and duties. Worldly friends depart from us, when we ask them to labor for us, instead of participating in our pleasures, or to complete what we have left undone, instead of receiving the benefits of our labors. But true Christian love is different: "When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple: Behold thy mother!" A few words, but a great, a solemn obligation. Who that knows the cares, the troubles, the anxiety and solitude of a mother; who that knows the duties of a son towards a mother, who in her old age needs an arm to support her, to protect her, to provide for her wants, can for a moment doubt the extent of such a duty? And yet the relation between son and mother rests not merely on the performance of their mutual duties; it rests on love. Unless they love each other, they cannot work for each other, nor can they render each other happy.

But I have yet to show you another heavenly beauty in the love of the Christian,—*faithfulness*, the crown of the whole.

Confidence and faithfulness presuppose each other; they are linked together like cause and effect; and in proportion as a man is faithful, will he be noble in his confidence. One that makes it

a rule to confide in no one, will certainly himself be fit for treachery and deception, and therefore, unworthy of confidence. Christian love, as it confides, will also consider its promises sacred, and will perform them without many words, without delay, and without weariness.

It is not the love of many words or of great eloquence, that is the most faithful. Peter was always ready to profess his unchangeable attachment to Christ, yet during that dark hour, he is not present at the cross. But John, whom we never find disposed to speak much of his love to the Saviour, stands by the side of the cross. The love of the world lives on the tongue, and is always inclined to provoke moments of trial. Christian love lives deep in the heart; it is neither too sanguine in its hopes, for it is meek; nor does it easily despair, for it believes in a divine Providence; but in the hour of trial it redeems all its pledges. And see how John fulfilled the request of Jesus. "From that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." The value of a gift depends no less on the time when it is given, than on the disposition with which it is given. A gift given when it is needed, and in the spirit of kindness, like the dew of heaven is twice blessed; it blesses him that gives and him that takes it. Christ expresses the wish, and *from that hour* John took her to his own home. The words, *from that hour*, distinctly indicate, that John acted without reflection, without hesitation, without seeking or finding any impedi-

ments : the will of Christ is his law, to fulfil it is his delight. We do not know, indeed, how long Mary lived after this. Her grave is shown to pilgrims in Jerusalem ; where John owned a house and lived in pious communion with Peter. Others however, are of the opinion, that Mary followed John to Ephesus, and died but shortly before this disciple went to his eternal home. Which opinion may be true, we cannot ascertain ; but one thing we do know, that the disciple whom Christ loved, never wearied of the mother whom the dying Saviour gave him.

Such was the love of John, and such should be the love of every Christian. Then the time would soon come, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Then would the time soon come, when,

Eastern Java there
Kneels with the native of the farthest west,
And Ethiopia spreads abroad the hand
And worships. When from every clime they come
To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
O Sion.—

We have now seen that Christian love is *strong*, *confiding*, and *faithful*. With what reflections shall we dismiss this subject !—

May we all love Christ as the women and the disciple did who stood by the cross. Then our love will be strong, confiding, and faithful. Such love

will teach us, not to neglect one and prefer another without any right or reason, but to love all with whom we have intercourse. It will teach us, not to disturb the peace of any person, neither of a child nor of a gray-headed sire, neither of our nearest neighbor nor of a stranger. It will teach us, to see in all our earthly relations a higher design, to act in a noble spirit, according to higher laws and for sacred purposes. It will teach us, to love the Lord in those, by whom we are surrounded, and to consider them as destined for immortality. Possessing such love, we would devote our principal care to the interests of their inner life; we would desire their sanctification; we would watch over their virtue and guard the peace of their souls; we would remind each other of that day, when we must give an account of what we have done; when husband and wife, father and child, brother and sister, friend and relative—all must stand before the throne of the Judge, to be acquitted or to be condemned. Yes, there is no true love, that is not anxious for the salvation of its objects. And no one is anxious for the salvation of others, who does not also desire their sanctification. And there is no anxiety, for their sanctification, that does not come from the Lord and lead to the Lord.

O that we may all love the Lord, I again repeat! Then we would think first of *Him* in all our doings and feelings, and of *ourselves*—last.

Then it would be easy for us to share the joy and misery of others, to weep with them and be cheerful with them ;—then it would be easy to yield to the wishes of our fellow-men, to devote ourselves to their benefit, to have patience with the irritable, and make every sacrifice for their good. Only when they request us to sacrifice truth, when they expect us to deviate from the path of duty in order to please them ; when we see them in danger, ensnared by sin, running into destruction—we will not gratify them ; our love to them will constrain us to warn, to admonish, to resist.

But this love is a heavenly fire ; it cannot be kindled by earthly passions nor by earthly charms. Pure love is of God and every one that loves, is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not, knows not God, for God is love. These are the fruits of regeneration : *faith*, *hope*, and *love* ; but the greatest of these is love. As the morning and the evening meet in the hour of noon, as the past and the future are linked together by the present—so hope, which looks forward into an unknown world, and faith, which embraces the past, are joined and united in love. In love, the grief of repentance and solicitude concerning a blessed immortality, are annihilated, like many discords, that are converted into a beautiful harmony. May God grant this love to every one of us ! Amen !

THE INNER LIFE OF THOMAS.

JOHN 20 : 24-29.

“ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not there when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again the disciples were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side ; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.”

LORD, our Heavenly Father ! Full of humility and reverence, as it becomes sinners, we approach Thy throne this morning. We are not worthy to take Thy holy name upon our lips ; we cannot come before Thee in our strength ; we have no right to call upon Thee ; yet we come in the name of our Saviour, for whose sake we pray, that Thou wilt accept us.

Lord ! may every one acknowledge that he stands in need of a Saviour ; that as sin has separated us from God, Christ alone can reunite us to Him ; that

as sin has destroyed all heavenly life in us, Christ alone can restore it again; that as sin has taken away all noble pleasures and joys, and poisoned the heart, which is the spring of all delight, Christ alone can render us happy again and bless us; that as sin has weakened us, Christ alone can strengthen us.

May all doubts that arise from sin and weakness disappear; may the night in which the sinner lives be dispelled, and the day of light and salvation break in upon him; may he desire communion with Him who is the source of life, the ruler of the invisible Church, the germ from which all that is good and holy and lovely grows forth.

Let the communion of all believers be full of life. May they walk in the spirit of Christ; may they view their life as He did; may they exert every power and use all their time and every opportunity, to labor for truth and for their fellow-men; to be zealous in their calling, to suffer and work in Christ's service to their last breath.

Lord, help us, and give us faith!

There is but One whom all must serve. Before Him may all those in power bend their knees; may all constitutions breathe His spirit, and all nations be renewed by His word, that all may gather around Him, to do homage to Him.

May the Gospel spread throughout our land and throughout the world; may its light triumph over the darkness of sin and its truth over superstition

and the slavery of sensual life. May it put an end to superstition and infidelity, to fanaticism and persecution, to wickedness and hypocrisy.

May all of us walk before Thee ; whether we are exposed to the eye of the world, or are in our secret chamber ; whether we are engaged in our daily employments, or in worshipping Thee, may we always think of Thee and of Thine Omnipresence, and live as it becomes those whom Thou hast consecrated to Thyself.

Hear us, O Lord ! and help us. Especially help those who either have never thought of their perilous state, or have rejected Christ. Help them that they may embrace the Saviour whilst they are in the midst of life, whilst they enjoy the preaching of the Gospel, and possess all the means of grace. May their hearts be softened, and their sense of guilt and danger be awakened ; may they be led speedily to the Son of God, who alone can save them from eternal ruin.

Bless this congregation. Let every one of its members live to Thee, and spend all his strength in honoring and glorifying Thy holy name. May this congregation increase in numbers ; may it also grow in vital piety, in holiness of life.

O Lord ! bless Thy aged servant, and be with him wherever he may be. May his lips continue long to bless Thy holy name, and to announce Thy counsel to multitudes ; and when once Thou shalt

call him to his home, may he shine as a star of the first magnitude among the ransomed of the Lord.

There are two classes of sceptics in matters of religion, both of which the Holy Scriptures have represented to us. The one consists of those whose doubts arise from a sinful and corrupt heart; they perceive that the purity and holiness demanded by Christianity, is at war with their wicked life; that their pride is offensive to Christian humility; their avarice to Christian benevolence; their selfishness to Christian philanthropy; their sensual lusts and appetites to Christian virtue and goodness. To admit the truth of Christianity, would be nothing less than to condemn themselves. This they are unwilling to do, and hence they seek for reasons and arguments by which the truth and reality of the religion of Christ may become at least doubtful. They doubt, because they fear lest, after all, there may be some truth in that which they, if they could, would take pleasure in destroying and annihilating. Though they do not confess the true and only basis of their doubts, neither to themselves nor to any one else; though they pretend to be impartial and free from prejudice, to be desirous of attaining to a conviction of their own,—yet the serpent of sin, lurking in the retreats of their hearts, causes constant uneasiness, and watches every opportunity to poison their life both for time and for eternity.

The other class of sceptics differs widely from this. They hope and desire that there may be truth in the Christian religion. But they cannot convince themselves of this in the manner, and by such evidence as seems to them to be true and sufficient. They doubt, therefore, because *hope and fear* are mingled in their bosoms. They hope with joy, yet, like a person that waits with high expectation for a long looked-for event, they fear a disappointment. Their mental activity is energetic and strong; they would rather be convinced than persuaded; they are unwilling to see with the eyes of others; but wish to see with their own eyes; they can think for themselves, and will not rely on the thoughts of others; whatever others may believe, they insist on a faith of their own—on a faith that germinates and grows in their own bosom. Hence it is that they are averse to all authority in matters of truth; what they have not seen and experienced themselves, what deviates from the analogy of their former knowledge, must submit to their doubts.

To the latter class of sceptics, Thomas belongs; to the former, the Pharisees. Both classes of sceptics exist, however, to this day. There are those who doubt the existence of a world beyond the senses, because they cannot see of what use it would be to them; and there are those, on the other hand, who torture themselves with doubts, from a sincere desire to attain to a satisfactory con-

viction of their own. The latter, I conceive, are represented in the rich and valuable history of Thomas; and in making it the subject of my discourse to-day, I intend to show

THAT ALL DOUBTS CAN BE SOLVED ONLY BY THE LORD, AND THAT HE WILL SOLVE SUCH ONLY AS ARE HUMBLE, AND AS ARISE FROM A SINCERE DESIRE FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.—In showing this, I propose to consider the text in an historical point of view, and deduce from each consideration such a general truth as shall naturally suggest itself.

In the first place, then, I shall prove from the text, that we can expect *such doubts only as are humble*, to be solved. In proving this, I take it for granted, that whatever we call the occurrences of our external life, what frequently seems to be entirely accidental, is intimately interwoven with our internal life—with our disposition and character, with our views, our manner of thinking, and the strength or weakness of our will. Now, when the text says Thomas was not present when Jesus came among the disciples the first time, it may at first appear that this was an accidental circumstance, that he was prevented by something unexpected from being with them, that his absence was in itself a matter of little or no importance. And yet this very circumstance was of so much importance, of so much weight, that if it had not occurred, one of the strongest proofs of Christ's resurrection would

never have been given us. Thomas was absent, not accidentally, but *providentially*; not by chance, but by a kind of necessity. Thomas, it is true, did not choose to be with the disciples, and in doing so, he acted freely; he did what he desired to do. But why did he alone, of all the disciples, desire to be absent? Why not John? or Peter? or any other disciple who was less inclined to doubt?

This question is of greater importance than it may seem at first to possess. Why is it that he, whom above all others we should think, Christ would have desired to convince of His resurrection, was absent, when He for the first time again spake the heavenly words: *Peace be with you*, to His disciples?

I answer: first, because Thomas was constrained by his character, by his disposition, to separate himself from his fellow-disciples; and secondly, *because the Lord had ordered it thus*.

Let us cast a glance at the character of Thomas. It has been frequently said with perfect truth, that each of Christ's apostles had a very marked and distinct character, and that each may be considered as the representative of a large class of men, all of whom, will more or less easily recognize themselves in one or the other of the apostles. Thomas has been looked upon by distinguished divines as the representative of the modern and ancient Rationalists, and as it would seem with great propriety. His mind, full of energy, is active and thirsts for truth, but he desires

to seek and find it by his own power. He cannot admit anything, unless it agrees with the laws of his reason, as they are known to him; he will think for himself; he will apply his thoughts and experience to all new knowledge; he will not receive a truth on the mere authority of others; he will sow on his own ground, and with his own hand what he desires to reap. He is, in short, more productive of thoughts of his own than susceptible of receiving those of others. A mind so much accustomed to its own thoughts, is naturally difficult of access to those of others. The two principal activities of the human mind are *spontaneity* and *receptiveness*; hence as the intellect in Thomas prevails over the heart, his spontaneous activity predominates. He was truly attached to Christ; but all that had lately taken place in regard to the Saviour, was so utterly opposed to his previously formed and immature expectations, that his whole former course of ideas is suddenly arrested. To him it is utterly incomprehensible, that *life* should proceed from an ignominious death, and salvation from the sufferings of him who bestows it; that honor should flow from the cross of reproach, and a healing balm for all nations from the wounds of the Saviour. The more strongly, the more confidently, he had once built his hopes upon Christ, the deeper and more painful was now his despondency, when He, from whom he had expected aid

for all men, Himself exclaimed, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ?

But the mind of Thomas is strong ; his hopes may be dimmed ; his expectations wither ; grief may oppress his soul ; night may surround his eye, and he may mourn ; but he will not despair. The past is to him like a dream : the promises of the Lord, the desires of the pious, the honor and the once smiling glory of the Saviour, the ardent emotions of his own heart ;—all are crushed by the cross : hence he resolves to flee forever from the possibility of recollection, to remain by himself, and to shun every occasion of again being deceived. It is his determination henceforth to preserve his judgment unbiassed, to be prudent and cautious, and no longer to associate with those disciples, who now appeared to him to be too credulous and sanguine. Thus he excluded himself from the presence of the Lord when for the first time after His resurrection He entered the room where the apostles were assembled. We see that what at first seems accidental, followed of necessity from the character of Thomas ; for he is determined not to be deceived, and therefore he banishes himself from the only source of consolation and comfort.

Yet while Thomas resolves and acts freely, he acts at the same time as *the Lord ordered it*. Nothing occurs without the will of God. Thomas acts freely, yet his action is included in the Divine plan. But why did the Lord order it thus ? That

the doubts, which agitated Thomas, might be developed to the highest degree, in order that all those, who after him should be excited by similar reflections and tortured by similar troubles, might have sufficient proof of the resurrection to silence their doubts and soothe their cares. Thomas, not only in his own name, but also in the name of all whom he represents, had to speak boldly and distinctly the ever memorable words: Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Thomas, as a great divine says, had to doubt, and it was his lot to express his doubt in the boldest and most forcible manner, so that no one might afterwards be tempted to doubt and disbelieve.

The general truth we may derive from this consideration is, that the life of man, with all its emotions and feelings, with all its thoughts and actions, with all its frailties and sinfulness, is interwoven with the general plan of God; that even then must we serve Him, when we deny His power and might. The Lord does not use man, as he uses the elements, fire, and water, and wind. He does not use him as a mere passive instrument; He deals with him as possessing reason and will. Yet though man reflects and considers, though he resolves and acts freely, his actions, without any intention on his part, form, nevertheless, a link in the great chain that connects time with eternity; that connects nation with nation,

and man with God. This Thomas did not dream of. He possesses a high degree of self-confidence ; what he does not see, he cannot believe. The idea, perhaps never struck him, that every pulsation of the heart presupposes a power, which is not in the heart, and that the power which gives life, can also effect a resurrection from the grave : he even witnessed the restoration of Lazarus to life, and yet, because he cannot comprehend why the Saviour must die, he doubts the power of Christ to rise from the grave Himself. This unlimited confidence in his own thoughts and ideas, was to be powerfully checked ; he was to be humbled, and then received into communion with Christ.

And this leads us to *the second consideration*.—Our Saviour, as it appears from the text, did not show himself very soon to Thomas, but made him wait full eight days. This also is worthy of notice. Why did the Saviour do so ? To purify, to soften, to humble Thomas. He was the disciple who demanded more proofs than the others, but to him they were given last of all. “ Why, perhaps he thought, does not Christ, if He lives again and has risen from the dead, show Himself to me ? I have lived with Him for three years, I have followed Him and resigned many comforts,—have I no right to see Him ? ” He is anxious to believe, but has not power enough to trust a Saviour ; he is desirous to lean on some one higher and greater than himself, as the

tender plant winds itself around a strong trunk ; but his mind, his manner of thinking, prevents him from embracing the cross. Perhaps at one time he considers all a dream ; perhaps at another, the thought flashes through his heart that Christ after all may have risen. Perhaps he already believes more than he confessed to himself ; perhaps he did not believe from joy : the news was so overpowering to him, so full of delight and happiness, that it seemed too good and great to be believed ; another disappointment would be too painful. We cannot say what thoughts, or what hopes and what fears, may have confusedly moved and excited the breast of Thomas ; yet it is certain that these precious days, these long eight days of suspense, were designed to purify and humble the impatient, self-confiding disciple ; that they were for him what fire is for gold.

Christ, moreover, did not show Himself to Thomas alone, but in the presence of all. In their presence, he had spoken the words of unbelief ; before them, also, he was to be humbled, and atone for his self-confidence, by exclaiming : *My Lord and my God.*

The general truth which this consideration teaches us is, that whatever occurs in our external life, is intended by the Lord for the welfare of our souls ; and that what seems to be accidental, may be replete with heavenly hints, with Divine admonitions, if we will only see and hear with the eye and the ear of the soul. Nothing that comes from the Lord—and what is there that does not come

from Him?—is meant only for our sensual welfare. Perhaps the Lord blesses us with riches, but He aims at the cultivation of our benevolence; perhaps He afflicts us with bodily disease, but He aims at the cultivation of meekness, patience, and submission. Let nothing, therefore, be a matter of indifference in our eyes; we may, and ought to read the will of God, not only in the Gospel, but in the history of our own life, in the history of nations, in the actions of men, and in the plays of children.

We pass over to a *third consideration*.—After eight days, the disciples are again assembled, and Thomas is among them. They are no doubt speaking about the Saviour, when suddenly and unexpectedly the words: *Peace be with you!* fall upon their ears like sounds from heavenly regions. All are astonished, but none more so than Thomas. He is silent; he does not dare to utter a word; his eyes are fixed upon Christ the Saviour, and the Saviour's eyes are fixed upon him. At length the Saviour interrupts this painful silence, by the words: Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Peter, who always boasted that he loved Christ more than all the other disciples, became sorrowful, when Christ asked him three times: *Lovest thou me?* And Thomas cannot have remained without deep emotions, without painful feelings,

when the Lord, in His kind yet pointed manner, reproved his unbelief. Christ, whose resurrection he had doubted so strongly, now stands before him, kindly offering all the proofs he had demanded. But Christ, it would seem, does not only stand before him now; He was with him also when he thought Him in the grave. He saw his emotions, He knew his thoughts, perceived his feelings, and witnessed his unbelief and his doubts, while he thought Him among those who are no more. If it be painful to see our mistrust of a common man, who is weak like ourselves, discovered by him, the mortification of Thomas must have been humiliating in a high degree, when his unbelief was exposed by the Lord Himself.

The general truth which I desire to derive from this consideration, bases itself upon the fact that Christ, though not informed by any one of the Apostles, was acquainted with the very words of Thomas, spoken in reference to His resurrection, and that this rendered the conversation of the Saviour more painful and humiliating to Thomas. Thus, though Christ is no longer among us according to the flesh, He is still with us by His Spirit. This truth all of us feel, yet not at all times. We feel it when we approach the table of the Lord; when we present our children to be baptized; or when we stand at the side of our dying friends. We feel it in the great epochs of our life, but very rarely when attending to the common business of the

week—when the affairs of the world engross our attention. But the Lord is with us at all times; He is with us, whether we rebel against Him, as Thomas did, or adore and praise Him. If we rebel, He will make us blush, as He did Thomas, but instead of giving us an opportunity to see Him, He may send us away from His presence and the glory of His power forever.

But let us now see *what effect* the kind and yet humbling manner, in which the Saviour wrought upon Thomas, had on him. The satisfaction, demanded so boldly, is offered to his doubting mind; he is permitted to thrust his hand into the Saviour's side, and lay his finger in the print of the nails; but instead of doing so, he exclaims: *My Lord and my God!*

The power of Christ appears more mysterious and incomprehensible, the longer we look upon it. It cannot be measured by our knowledge; it constantly unfolds deeper riches, greater glory, higher splendor. It is mild, yet irresistible; it utters itself without pomp and without effort, and yet it effects its desired ends.

Thomas had demanded signs: on them his faith was to depend; without them he would not believe at all; and with them he was scarcely willing to acknowledge truth to be truth. The demanded signs are given but he refuses to accept them. *Whence this sudden change?* The power of Christ shed a new and heavenly light into his bosom, and

the artificial edifice of his doubting understanding was broken down forever. His doubts were strong but divine grace was stronger; he had resisted long, but now his conviction was so much the deeper. It was no longer the man with the wounds and bruises, that stood before Thomas; it was the Saviour—it was God in man, whose power had conquered death.

There is indeed a striking resemblance between the manner in which our Saviour treated Peter and Thomas, and we cannot help being reminded of the history of the one by that of the other. When the Saviour asked Peter the third time: Lovest thou me? he perceived what he had never seen so clearly before. A great change was wrought in him as in Thomas. The change in the case of both, was as great as that of Paul at Damascus, only not as sudden. The religious life which had already begun to develop itself, was accelerated and instantly brought to its height by the mysterious power of Christ.

From this consideration we may learn two things. First, that those who would believe with miracles, will also believe without them, for miracles are as much a subject of faith as divine revelation; and as divine revelation is a miracle, so every miracle is a divine revelation. Those, on the other hand, who are not willing to believe without seeing signs and miracles, would be the first to exclaim with the Pharisees: he casts out Devils

through the Prince of the Devils. But, secondly, we may learn, that faith is wrought in us, not by our own power, not by our will, nor in our own way and manner, but by the irresistible grace of God. Not that God works *without* man, but *with* him. When grace approaches man and awakens a desire in him for itself; when man seeks what God offers; when the child longs for the father and the father meets the desire of the child; then faith is wrought like sight, when the eyes open to the light and the light falls upon them. This is the mystery, before which we must always remain speechless, that none can find the Lord, unless He comes down from Heaven to seek sinners; that no man can know the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, and moreover, that no man can come to the Son, unless the Father draw him.

But there is *another consideration*, which the richness of this history presses upon us. Thomas demands a sign and receives it; the Pharisees ask for one, and Christ says: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. What Christ grants to Thomas, he denies in a severe manner to the Pharisees: is this not partiality?

The doubts of the Pharisees arose from their unwillingness to acknowledge Christ as their Lord; from a decided reluctance to give up their own honor and dominion, and yield both to Him to whom

they were due. Though the signs demanded by the Pharisees should have been given, they would not have convinced, but only have embittered them the more. Their will is the magic spell, that excludes them from Christ, and hence Christ does not importune them. Thomas, on the other hand, doubted what he desired to believe; the Lord knew Him; He knew his heart. He had followed Him for three years under much self-denial and many inconveniences, and though he asked for reasons, yet he was anxious to see the long-expected Saviour. Hence the Lord granted him what he denied to the Pharisees.

Thus my main proposition is fully established. The Lord alone can solve our doubts. We are able to raise them, but we cannot remove them. Yet the Lord will solve such only as are humble and pure in their character. As long therefore as our doubts proceed from sin and a corrupt heart, as long as they are the offspring of wicked desires, as long as we have them, because we are *determined* to have them, so long we shall remain excluded from the Church of Christ *by our own will*. The miracle indeed, which is greater than that of the prophet Jonas who being buried in the belly of the whale, came forth to life again, the miracle of the resurrection of Christ, who came forth from the grave, has been wrought before our eyes, as before those of the Pharisees—has been wrought before the whole world; we hear its history. We see its effects;

but many will not have anything to do with Christ, and hence they doubt. They have no desire for Him, they feel no need of Him, and though it would be the joy and delight of the Saviour to dispel all fears and all doubts, He is unwilling to force men to believe. Their will is their kingdom. The Lord suffers them to reign in it. If, on the other hand, we doubt like Thomas, the Saviour will show us His wounds, and our souls will read salvation in His pierced hands and side, and will exclaim with joy and gratitude : *My Lord and my God.*

But let us hasten to the final words of the text : *Blessed are they, that have not seen and yet have believed.*

I shall leave it undecided, whether or not these words contain, as many think, a rebuke for Thomas. They certainly have a stronger bearing upon us, than upon the disciple who could both see and believe. As Thomas had to doubt, lest we should doubt, so were these memorable words spoken principally on our account, and at no time were they of greater importance than they are now. It is peculiar to our age to base all faith and belief on sensual evidence ; and it is a happy inconsistency if the existence of a supernatural world—a world inaccessible to our senses—a world of invisible powers—a kingdom of spiritual and immaterial beings, is yet at all admitted. Many deny its existence, and consider a belief in it not only super-

stitious but even prejudicial to the investigation of truth, and injurious to pure morality. They say: unless we can see with our own eyes, unless our senses can touch, or smell, or taste, or hear a thing, we cannot reasonably be expected to believe in it. And yet who has ever seen a *thought*, or felt a power with his hands, or heard an inclination? Thoughts, and powers, and inclinations, are invisible; and though we cannot see them, we must believe in them. We are surrounded by an invisible world; we live and breathe in it; every power that works in the plant and forms its beauties; the instinct that in the bee builds the cell, and in the bird the artificial nest; the mighty Hand that moves innumerable worlds, and preserves order and regularity: all are invisible and supernatural. And whatever distinguishes man from the animal—reason and conscience, his most noble thoughts and most sublime emotions, his will and other high prerogatives, every hope and every fear—belongs to the world which cannot be perceived by the senses. Happy those who believe, though they cannot see. Without believing, man sinks to a level with the brute.

Yet the word *see* may be used metaphorically. What we cannot see with the eye, we may see with the soul. The soul is indeed the true organ of sight, as the original language in which both words are found indicates, by deriving *soul* and *seeing* from the same root. The eye may perceive the effects of the magnet, but it is the soul, the thinking power in us, which ascribes these effects to an in-

visible agency. The eye may perceive the effects of a resolute will, but it is the soul that sees the will itself. In the same way, we may *see* Christ around us. He once lived on earth, and the effects of His life are visible even now. He has a history, which has constantly produced new actions for more than eighteen hundred years. It is His power that tore down the walls which superstition and hate had erected between nations. His spirit pervades our constitutions, has softened our laws, has influenced the manners of society, has entered our institutions of learning, and lives more or less in the views, and convictions, and morals of the age. If we desire to see Christ with the eye of the soul, we may find Him in every voice of truth, in every noble virtue, in every admonition of conscience, and in all that surrounds us; for whatever is alive has a tongue and a language to proclaim, that we are upheld by an invisible power; that as every pulsation of the heart presupposes a power which is not in the heart, so the spiritual world within us bears witness of the Lord. Wherever we stand, we stand on holy ground, and it becomes us to put off our shoes from off our feet, for the Lord is present.

Like all other faith, spiritual faith is qualified by the senses. We must hear the Divine word and see its Divine effects. Christ, the Christian religion, Christendom, are not mere thoughts; they may be seen in their effects; they are realized; they have entered the world under a *distinct* form. Would it

not be illogical, to admit an invisible power in the magnet, when we see its effects upon iron separated from it by a thick marble plate, and yet deny the presence of an invisible power, when we cannot avoid acknowledging the visible effects of the Christian religion upon the world? Yet it is not this external, historical form; it is the spirit that has wrought it, on which the mind must rest; but spirit exists only for spirit, as light does for light. Whatever is spiritual, must be understood spiritually and esteemed spiritually. The sense for the light is the eye, the sense for sound is the ear, but the sense for the Invisible is the soul. To live and to die like the animal, our senses are sufficient; but to live and to die like men, for eternity, we must have a soul. The element of the soul is faith; without it, the soul cannot attain to peace. But faith we have, when we see not, and yet perceive; hear not, and yet believe; have not, and yet possess. It is a knowledge of the Invisible connected with a firm conviction of its existence. Its contents are, that the Saviour of the world is the Son of God, and the Son of God is the Saviour of the world; that these two things penetrate each other and are *one*; that Christ, as the Son of God, had to be, and He alone *can* be the Saviour of the world, and that the Saviour of the world only can be the Son of God.

Again: the effects of this faith upon us are expressed in the words of Thomas: My Lord and my God. He who lived on earth, and shed His blood and died for us, is to be our *Lord*. He is to

reign over us, and we are to become citizens of that kingdom in which His will is the only law. Thus faith establishes a connection between Christ and ourselves, and though the eye cannot see Him, and the hand cannot touch Him, yet we love Him, we believe in Him, we have constant communion with Him. Our communion is spiritual; we reflect upon what He has said; we review what He has done; we receive what He has taught; we reap what He has sown; we strive and labor with His assistance; we watch by His divine grace over every emotion, and notice the true import of every occurrence in the history of the world; we depend on His counsel; we are strengthened by His word; we rejoice in Him and live before Him.

Such faith is a messenger from Heaven, to bring happiness, and blessing, and joy upon earth. Those who have doubted like Thomas, will embrace with delight the Source of life and of light, of consolation and joy, of strength and of salvation. It is this faith, which alone can dispel the night of sin, and lead us from strength to strength until we shall see the glory of our Saviour.

Oh, that there might be no one present, who, by his own will, shall continue to deprive himself of that peace and favor, of that joy and happiness and blessing, which those shall have forever who believe and are faithful! Lord, help us, that we may all see Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. Amen.

THE INNER LIFE OF MARY MAGDALENE.

JOHN 20 : 11-18.

"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping : and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou ? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father : but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father ; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her."

LORD, our Heavenly Father ! We approach Thy Throne this morning to thank Thee for the many mercies Thou hast bestowed upon us. Thou hast been with us from our earliest youth up to the present hour ; Thou hast watched over us and protected us from all dangers ; Thou hast given us strength to endure the heavy trials which life entails on every one, and hast preserved us until this day. But especially would we thank Thee,

Lord! that Thou didst send Thy only-begotten Son into the world: our thoughts cannot comprehend the sacrifice He made for us, nor the sufferings He endured for us, nor the debt He paid for us, nor the blessings he procured for us.

O Lord! we are sinners, and the reward of sin is death. As death follows sin, so the grave follows death; we cannot look upon our graves without remembering sin, and as life feels averse to death, so the sight of the grave arouses bitter feelings and thoughts in the heart of the sinner. But we thank Thee, Lord! that He, in whom Thou wast well pleased, the Prince of life, endured death and passed into the grave on our account. When we reflect on the grave of the Saviour, we may feel reconciled; we may rejoice and hope as we continue the journey at whose end the grave awaits every one of us. Now the grave is no longer the house of decay and destruction, but the silent chamber in which a new life develops itself; for the Saviour has subdued the power of death, and by His resurrection conquered the grave forever.

May we often meditate on the grave of the Saviour; may we hear the Saviour's voice calling each one of us by name, as he called Mary; may we receive consolation and comfort as she did, and may our sadness, like hers, be turned into joy.

Lord! who art our Friend and Saviour, pardon our weakness when we sometimes tremble at the sight of the grave; when, overcome by the evils

of life and pressed down by a sense of our frailties, we are downcast and without hope. Be near us, as Thou wast near to Mary, when she wept at Thy sepulchre; may Thy mercy and grace speak a word of consolation to us, and awaken in us a presentiment of the heavenly joy and happiness prepared for those that die in the Lord. And especially when the evening of life approaches, when our days are spent and our strength decreases, then, Lord, we pray, be near us and bless us with resignation and comfort and hope. Assisted by Thee, raised up by Thy mighty hand, and invited by the blessings and happiness of Heaven, our souls will hasten to rise on the wings of faith and hope to see Thy glory.

Lord! we pray that Thou wilt look in mercy upon the youth collected here. Though in the bloom of life may they remember that death calls not only the superannuated, but seizes also the child, whose first smiles have scarcely saluted the light of the sun. Teach them so to number their days that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom, and be prepared to meet their Judge whenever He shall call them hence.

The death of our Saviour had produced different effects upon His friends and enemies. The enemies of Christ constantly apprehended, that something would follow His death which would reveal His Divine power, and expose themselves and their unjust cause. The convulsions which took place

during the dying hour of the Saviour, and the favorable impression made upon many in their own midst, by the sublime manner in which He bore His sufferings, were so many accusers, rising up to charge them with the murder of the Son of God. But especially the words, *that He should rise again on the third day*, seem to have sounded in their ears constantly, and to have alarmed their sinful consciences. Hence we see them exercise the greatest caution, lest some imposition should be practised upon them. They appoint a watch to observe what might be going on around the grave; they impress their seal, the seal of their authority and power, upon the entrance to the grave, as if they would forbid the dead to rise again. It is evident that they half fear the possibility of Christ's resurrection, and half hope that all is only the well-planned scheme of an intended imposition, and to frustrate it nothing more is necessary than their vigilance. Thus vibrating between hope and fear, they looked forward with much solicitude to the third day.

The disciples, on the other hand, had lost all hope and energy since the death of their Friend. Christ had spoken to them of His resurrection, of the Heavenly Kingdom and its mysteries; he had prophesied everything as it took place in His latter days, but they did not understand Him at the time when He spoke to them, nor did they remember His words and recognize the fulfilment of His pro-

phacies, in the occurrences of the day. His enemies remember all this, and fear; but His friends have forgotten it, and despair. They are children of the dust, and the wings of hope cannot rise beyond the sphere of their understanding. They seek Christ in the grave, whilst He has already broken the seal of sin. What they desire and most heartily long for, they do not dare to hope for, though it is already realized, though every breath of air might bear the glad tidings on its wings.

Among those who went early in the morning to seek Christ in the grave, was also Mary Magdalene. Seeing the sepulchre empty, she concludes that her Lord has been taken away; she weeps, and cannot find any consolation until the Lord in His love reveals Himself to her. When I spoke last to you, I represented the effects of Christ's death upon Thomas; it cannot be otherwise than interesting, to see how it affected the *female* portion of His followers. To-day, therefore, the rich and attractive history of Mary Magdalene at the grave of our Lord, shall engage our attention. May the Lord be with us, and bless us, while I attempt to show :

HOW THE SADNESS OF MARY MAGDALENE, WHEN STANDING AT THE GRAVE OF THE LORD, AND LONGING AFTER HIM, WAS CHANGED INTO UNSPEAKABLE JOY.

The text says: *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping.* The grave and tears belong together; they are inseparable. The grave is the

monument erected by death to all that lives ; it is the symbol, too, of the vanity of all earthly good. All that is on earth must sink into the grave. Neither beauty, nor health, nor riches ; neither honor nor splendor ; neither power nor influence ; neither strength nor youth, can exempt any one from the common fate of all that is perishable. All must sink into the grave, where the blooming youth moulders with the gray-headed sire—where the ashes of the profligate mingle with those of the ambitious—where the pious and good slumber by the side of the wicked. Whoever, therefore, stands at a grave, if he be serious and thoughtful, will feel sad, either because he remembers one whose ashes repose in the grave beside which he stands, or because he is reminded of the graves of friends and relatives, or because he is led to think of his own grave.

But Mary stood at *the grave of the Saviour*—at the grave of Him who, she once expected, would conquer death and triumph over the grave, but who now had Himself gone to this dark abode. The grave does not only remind us of the death of the body, a separation of the soul from the body, which separation is confirmed by the dark dwelling to which the body is consigned ; it reminds us, too, of the death of the *soul*, which is caused by sin. As the body lives by the connection of all its parts, by the harmonious co-operation of all its organs, and by the power of life that pervades all of them,

so the soul can live only by its connection with the spiritual world, and by the power of God that reigns in it and animates it. This connection being destroyed by sin, the divine power is excluded and the soul is dead. The dust, into which the body is converted after death, does not feel its deprivation of life; but the soul, separated from God, is conscious of its death; and as often as it thinks of death, of its separation from the source of life, it cannot help feeling a horror which fills the heart with sadness, and with a desire after One who can restore it to life again. When Mary stood at the grave of the Lord, who had promised the restoration of the soul to life and the annihilation of the power of sin, what else could she do but weep? and how could she feel otherwise than sad? Joy, permanent joy, we can possess only when a sense of everlasting life pervades us. But when we desire to know whether an all-controlling love exists beyond the stars—whether, when death has separated soul and body, we will ourselves continue to live and meet our departed friends again; when we desire to know this, and have no means to satisfy our desire, then we must feel sad. Such sadness does not depend on external circumstances, but only and exclusively on the absence of faith. Whether fortune smiles or frowns upon us, if we have faith, we will be cheerful; on the other hand, nothing can remove our sadness, so long as sin keeps alive the consciousness of the separation of

our souls from God and everlasting life. This was the sadness of Mary; from it her love to the Saviour proceeded, while He was yet alive; and from it her tears flowed when she thought Him dead. She knew only of one joy,—to be with the Saviour; with Him her time passed by like a festival, but without Him her heart must break.

But let us notice *the place* where she wept: "*She stood*," John says, "*without, at the sepulchre*," when she wept. As soon, however, as she looks into the grave, as soon as she bends herself to examine it, her eyes perceive two angels, the one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where Jesus had been lying. Yet Mary, absorbed in her grief, does not perceive that those before her are angels. Having lost Him to whom she had devoted herself with lasting gratitude, whom she served with the deepest tenderness, for whose promises she had been waiting, whom she loved and revered in greatest sincerity and earnestness—the whole world is without interest to her, is empty for her, however much it may offer to the eye. Her state may be compared to that of a traveller, who follows with his eyes the setting sun, and watches it with intense delight until it sinks beneath the horizon; wherever then he turns his eyes, he perceives on every plant and every object nothing but the image of the sun. So Mary's eyes, clouded by tears, cannot see anything distinctly, except that she has suffered an irreparable loss. This heavy thought

reigns in her bosom, and shuts up every avenue to any other idea that might present itself from without.

Yet what Mary could not see, we can see now. Angels accompanying our Lord through life, followed Him into the grave. These invisible powers were invisibly active to develop a new life, a power which should conquer death and triumph over the grave. Angels are immortal. Their nature forms a most striking contrast with the work of death. Whoever sees them in a grave cannot but be reminded, that whilst all that is earthly must die, there is something which will live forever; that whilst all belonging to time is finite, there is something which is infinite—which will continue after all that the eye can see shall have perished. It is impossible for our thoughts to be altogether occupied with death, when we see beings before our eyes that are immortal. But Mary did not recognize angels; for her mind was too full of the idea of mortality, decay and disappointment.

Woman, why weepest thou? the angels inquire. They ask this question, not from ignorance of the cause of Mary's tears, but from wonder and astonishment. "What cause have you to weep, when you stand at the grave of the Saviour who has broken the chains of death? See, there is no death in this grave, no decay, no destruction; this grave is not the abode of confusion, darkness and fear, but it is the sweet and cheerful chamber of

life, where light, order and regularity reign. Here everything is in its proper place. Here lies the napkin, there the linen. Nothing indicates the power of death, but all manifests a peaceful, silent, and miraculous development of life. Here there is no cause for weeping; here there is no tomb, not a chamber of death; here is the peaceful haven of rest, the smiling region of hope."

But Mary did not understand the meaning of the question. Occupied with one thought, filled with one grief, seeking One only and turning away from all that is not Himself, she says, with female naïveté, *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.*

These words, so tender and affecting, betrayed a childlike innocence and an attachment to Christ, of which the tender nature of woman alone is susceptible. She does not doubt for a moment but that the persons before her know whom she means by the words, *My Lord*. She knows of but One who is her Lord; Him alone she seeks; to Him alone she belongs; His feet she had washed with her tears; Him she had followed to the cross, not shrinking from the sight of scattered skulls, but exposing herself to many dangers and especially to the revilings of a rude and unfeeling crowd; Him she would now go to seek, and if dangers of all kinds impede her delicate feet. There is a beauty in the love and sadness of Mary, which attracts us the more strongly, the more we examine

it; the pen of man can never describe it; it must be felt.

When we contrast Mary's love with our own indifference to our Saviour, we must feel ashamed and humbled in the dust. There was a time when the Eastern continent, overflowed with infidelity, had taken away the Lord, and no one asked where He had been laid. And even now in our own land are we surrounded by sects, that have stolen the Lord and buried Him, we cannot tell where. They have buried Him in their reason, and deny that He exists any longer. They have put their trust in that fallible and uncertain power, whose delight it is to doubt its own assertions—to doubt the only true Friend of our souls, on whom alone our peace rests on earth and our hope in the hour of death. They have removed Him out of their sight, lest some should adhere to Him and forsake them. Oh! that many would turn and ask, like Mary, You have taken away our Lord; tell us where you have laid Him, that we may go and seek Him! that their tears might flow and veil their eyes, so that they could see nothing but Christ, who loved them and died for them!

Again: When Mary in her grief had thus spoken, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus and knew not that it was Jesus. He whom she seeks is close by her to console her, to comfort her, but she does not know Him; He stands at her side, but she seeks Him at a distance; He speaks to her, but

she does not recognize His voice. What is the cause of all this? As Thomas was determined not to believe in the resurrection of Christ, so Mary, feeling convinced that He was dead, could not for a moment hope to see Him alive again. Grief and hope exclude each other; when one fully takes possession of the mind the other must depart. Mary *loves* the Saviour, but she is not yet able to *believe*. Hence it is, that though Christ speaks to her by the angels, and though He speaks to her Himself, she, absorbed in the thought and the remembrance of the dead, cannot see the living. And is it otherwise with us? Christ is near us when we mourn, to comfort us—when we tremble in the storms of life, to strengthen us—when we have no rest in our bosoms, to give us peace—when passions rage within, to advise us, to direct us, to guide us. And though He is near us and speaks to us through conscience, by His Word, by adversity and prosperity, we do not hear Him, we do not recognize Him. It is faith alone that discovers the Lord in all that surrounds us. Hence the true believer, who desires to see the Lord and only the Lord, perceives Him everywhere. To him He appears in the rays of the morning sun; the evening breezes whisper the name of the Saviour in his ear; when the dewdrops sparkle, when the stars of the night glitter, he feels that the Lord is near; for all that is reminds him of the Lord, points to Him, comes from Him, and leads to Him.

Yet, though we may be unwilling and unable, by our own thoughts, to recognize the Lord, He can make Himself known to us, since His power exceeds every other power. *Mary!* He calls; and she who had lost herself in seeking the Friend of her soul, finds at once both herself and Him again.

There is a kind of grief whose strength absorbs every other feeling. In it we lose all desire for food and drink and for everything else; our thoughts are no longer ours, or at our command, but they centre without our knowledge or will upon our affliction, which, like a whirlpool, draws within itself whatever comes near it, every desire, every wish, and every thought. The greatness of such grief overpowers us, and we are lost in it. Whatever is spoken to us cannot console us, for we have an ear only to listen to the sighs of our broken hearts. Neither kindness nor love can cheer us, for we are inaccessible to them. In such a state, nothing can help us but a power which is able to bring us back to ourselves. Whoever, at any time, has stood beside a friend under the dominion of such a grief; whoever has tried, and tried in vain, to administer comfort and consolation, in every way and by all means, will know that then the fulness of his love and sympathy burst forth in simply calling his dear friend by his name. So a mother does, when the little babe on her arms cannot be silenced by any other means. So Christ did, when he stood before Mary. The name by

which friends call us, exercises a peculiar power over us. Though our internal being cannot be expressed by a mere word, a mere name, friends, nevertheless, indicate clearly, by the tone in which they pronounce it, that in the *name* they wish to comprise all they love in us. Our Saviour, therefore, frequently either humbles or elevates His disciples by the manner in which He addresses them by name. *Simon, son of Jonas*, lovest thou me? He says to him who denied Him. The name which the love of the Saviour had given this disciple was Peter. But when Jesus wishes to humble him, he calls him, not by the name of love, but by the name he had whilst in a state of sin. On the other hand, when He would console Mary, He only pronounces her name. If we had heard the sound falling from His lips, and perceived the love, tenderness and compassion which it expressed, we could understand it better. Mary, having lost herself in grief, was now brought back again to herself by hearing the Saviour's lips call her by name, in the same tone of love in which she had so often heard Him pronounce it before.

But this is not all. The remark I made with regard to Thomas is true of Mary also. The will of the Lord accompanied the word spoken and produced such sudden effects. *Let there be Light!* and the element, not yet born, arises out of nothing and shines in the darkness! *Let there be Light!* and consolation breaks in upon the dark bosom of man!

The Lord wills it, and it is done. Mary! He says, and a light not known before streams at once into her bosom. Now every power within her exclaims, that He whom she loves and whom she adores is standing before her; that He who died is risen again; that He who was nailed to the cross speaks to her and is with her; and like Thomas, overcome with joy, she stammers the word, *Rabboni*.

Oh! that Christ would speak to, and bring back, every one of us to Himself! that He would call by name every one who has lost himself in sensual lusts, or in thoughtlessness and levity, or in ambition and avarice, so that each of us might exclaim, *Rabboni!* or, like Thomas, My Lord and my God!

But the Lord has different ways by which He effects His designs. He dealt otherwise with Thomas, otherwise with Peter and John. Before drawing some general inferences from my discourse, I shall yet cast a glance at *this difference*, as it presents itself in strict connection with the subject.

It has often been asked, how it was that Peter and John did not see angels, whilst Mary saw them. The answer is, that Christ treats each one according to his nature and wants. In the case before us, He accommodates His dealings to the different natures of *man* and *woman*. In man there prevails by nature thought and reflection, strength and courage, judgment and a desire to examine, to investigate, and to come to a result by his own activity. He is fearless, and disdains mere wishes;

he is decided in his belief or unbelief. Woman, on the other hand, is tender and delicate, full of feeling, retires within herself, and always seeks for protection. It is her nature to believe and confide, and when she can do neither, tears bedim her eyes, and sadness fills her bosom. In view of this natural difference, Christ treated Peter and John differently from Mary. Let us follow out this difference.

Peter and John went to the grave, John fast, Peter slowly; John, impelled by love, Peter retarded by the remembrance of his sin in denying the Lord. Arriving at the grave, John just *looks* into it, but Peter *sprang* into it; then, John having followed, they *examined* it, and finding the napkin and the linen, each at its place, they come to the conclusion that the Lord has risen. They stood, therefore, in no need of the sight of angels. But Mary needed comfort; she felt sad; she was under the dominion, not of *thought*, but of *feeling*; hence the Lord sends angels to console her, and uses entirely different means to bring life and light into her heart, to change her deepest darkness into the highest joy.

We must, therefore, not expect that what we have observed in the life of Mary, will also happen in the same or in a similar way to us in order that we may believe. As the condition of every one, his disposition, his circumstances, have something peculiar, so the Lord will approach him in a peculiar manner, in a way best adapted to his case.

Let each one of us be watchful, and direct his attention to whatever may ripen for him in the course of time; let none of us suffer anything to pass by unnoticed, which may tend to advance our eternal welfare; for the lowest as well as the highest, the least as well as the greatest, may be used by the grace of God to lead us to Him.

Having now shown the effects which the sepulchre of the Saviour had on Mary, and how her sadness, while standing at it, was changed into joy, I shall proceed to consider *what consolation we ought to derive from the grave of Christ.*

In contemplating the sepulchre of our Saviour, two thoughts present themselves: the one relates to our own graves; the other, to the grave of sin. We must all die. One supplants the other, and in turn he is himself supplanted. According to a certain order we appear upon the stage of activity, and according to a certain order we are called off again, the one amid joy and happiness, the other amid grief and distress. Whoever may have shone in honor or power, whoever may have been weighed down by the troubles and cares of his short existence, the one as well as the other, is destined to be confined to a solitary grave, there to moulder and be forgotten. At the end of our short journey the grave awaits every one of us, and yawns to receive whatever lives. Millions of graves are lying under the heavens, and every evening the pale light of the stars falls upon new ones. When we see the

work of death around us, can we, much as we would desire it, avoid thinking that our time also will soon come, when we shall be alone and excluded from the light of the sun; when we must part with the sweet and lovely habit, to be and to live, and when a stone, which we shall not be able to roll off, will close up our dark and narrow dwelling? We are young yet; some of us at least are in the bloom of life; but death is not satisfied with plucking the superannuated, gray-headed sire, who, like ripe fruit, by its own weight, separates himself from the tree of life and falls into the hand of death; it likewise seizes the little child, when its first smiles have scarcely saluted the light of the sun, and with great ease converts the cradle into a coffin. When, now, we reflect on the grave of the Saviour, we must think of our own also; it is our duty to do so; and when we see the stone rolled off from the tomb of Christ, we cannot help asking ourselves: Who will roll off the stone from our graves? or shall it remain forever upon them? Shall these members that now form a whole, that now are animated by the same stream of life, and that we call our own, never be united again after they have once been dissolved into dust?

But again: Reflecting on the grave of the Saviour, we cannot help thinking of sin, which is followed by death, as death is by the grave. If the stone that lies on the grave is heavy and impenetrable, and renders our dark abode inaccessible, the stone

of sin that lies on our hearts is still more so ; and if we cannot remove the former, we can much less remove the latter. Its weight is heavy, and presses us down : as the stone on the grave excludes the light of the sun, so the stone on our hearts excludes us from communion with God, impedes every noble endeavor, and shuts us up within the sphere of our own transgressions and of our ruin. And at no time will the stone of sin press harder upon the unbelieving, than in the hour of death. Fear will seize them then ; for, to meet an offended Judge, without the hope of pardon, is an awful thought. To go into eternity without knowing what awaits them there, must render the hour of death more terrible than the most glowing imagination can represent it to be.

When such thoughts cast us down, and we reflect upon Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre of our Saviour, we are disposed to ask : What *consolation* may be derived from the grave of Christ ?

The grave of Christ was the first that could not retain its prey. He whom death attempted to destroy, came forth a conqueror over it. In rolling off the stone from His grave, He rolled off the stone of sin from the hearts of all those who believe in Him. The grave can no longer alarm the believer in Christ ; for the Prince of Life, of His own free will, and from a desire to redeem us from the terrors of death, sank into it. The believer knows that the hour is coming, in the which all who are

in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Before Christ had suffered death, the grave was dark, but now light shines around and in it. Its terrors are gone; it rather invites all those who, weary of life, and worn out by sufferings and cares and anxieties, long for a haven of rest, to throw off their burdens and retire from the world. It invites the unfortunate, on whom the sun of life never sent a ray of joy and happiness, to come, leaving all solicitude and every kind of painful anxiety behind. For the grave also is the house of God and the gate of Heaven; there we shall lie down and sleep in peace, for we know that those who die in the Lord are blessed.

Again: To the believer, who reflects on the sepulchre of Christ, the grave is no longer the workhouse of destruction, but the silent chamber in which a new life will develop itself. The germ of a new creation may be discovered in the midst of destruction. As soon as we become the prey of death, it may commence the work of dissolving our bodies; but we have a right to hope that all the parts will be reunited, and that, in a glorified state, the same bodies will again be connected with our souls. For Christ rose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that sleep; and as all die in Adam, so all shall live in Christ. This *rai-*

ment, which we shall have to hand over to the grave, will be restored to us again. For what is sown in dishonor, will be raised in glory; what is sown in weakness, will be raised in power; what is sown a natural body, will be raised a spiritual body. The body is the seed sown by the hand of the Lord, to germinate and ripen for eternity. Since Christ has burst the chains of death, it cannot retain us; but we shall come forth formed for Heaven, and fit to enter the perfect glory of the Father.

Now we say to him who stands at the grave of a friend, and weeps because he remembers with sadness the ashes which once inclosed the soul he loved: Go to the grave of the Saviour, meditate on what He has done for you, and dry your tears. Honor the memory of the deceased, but no longer consider them dead. They live, and the connection between them and yourselves is not destroyed. They are citizens of the city of God, to which we also belong by faith, and which we hope to enter in the hour of death, when we shall meet them again. Having stood at the graves of our friends, and remembered them with sadness, we ought to leave them strengthened in faith and rejoicing in hope.

Different, however, very different is the condition of those who have not embraced the Saviour. His grave exists for them as well as for us; they see the stone rolled off as well as we; but the stone of

sin still rests on their hearts; and though they can see the entrance to the grave, they cannot see an egress from it. When in the hour of death the face grows pale—when the blood begins to circulate but slowly, and the heart to beat irregularly—when their eyes grow dim, and darkness surrounds them, then it will be in vain for them to exclaim with the great poet in the struggle of death: More light! more light! They must go, and they will go in despair. They must go to meet their Judge, and they will be without hope or consolation. The grave yawns to receive them, an eternity awaits them, but what it will be to them they cannot know.

May Christ call each one of us by name, as He did Mary. In regard to every one of us, may He speak as He did at the grave of Lazarus: Take away the stone. May the stone of sin be removed from the hearts of all, so that all of us may believe in Christ, and have everlasting life through Him. Amen.

THE SOCIAL JOYS OF THE INNER LIFE.

JOHN 2 : 1-11.

LORD, our heavenly Father! Thou art a great and a holy God, full of power and wisdom, but we are weak and frail beings, full of sin and uncleanness, and not worthy to take Thy holy Name upon our polluted lips. And yet we appear before Thee to adore and worship Thee, for Thou hast permitted us to call Thee our Father, to pray to Thee, and express our gratitude and our wants before Thy throne. Lord! we come not in our own name, but in the name of our Saviour, for whose sake we would pray Thee to hear us.

We would thank Thee, Lord! for Thy continued goodness towards us. Thou hast been with us, Lord, from our earliest youth; Thou hast protected us from many dangers, and given us food and clothing, health and strength, and reason; and Thou hast given us many opportunities to know Thee rightly; Thou hast preserved us until this day, and again hast granted us the privilege to read Thy word and to listen to it. O God! grant that these many precious privileges may not pass by, without our making a proper use of them; that

they may not render us more guilty and more careless, but may they lead us to Thee, and make us acquainted with our characters, and awaken in us a desire for the Saviour, who by His blood has rendered an atonement for the sins of all who believe in Him.

We would thank Thee, Lord, this morning, for all the valuable opportunities we enjoy to cultivate our minds and prepare ourselves for usefulness. We thank Thee for all the schools and institutions established throughout the world, and pray that Thou wilt abundantly bless them. May they be true nurseries of piety, and may the youth collected in them, not merely fit themselves for usefulness on earth, but for bliss and happiness in Heaven ; may they not learn to serve Mammon, but may they early embrace Thy service.

Lord ! we thank Thee, that Thou hast watched over us during the past session ; Thou hast kept off from this Institution sickness and death, and all of us have enjoyed good health ; Thou hast permitted us to approach another vacation, and to enjoy the pleasures of social intercourse. We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast created us social beings ; that we are capable of enjoying each other's society, and have in it a source of much happiness. Also this vacation will bring parents and sons and friends and acquaintances together ; and, Lord, may every one of us enjoy himself, but so as will be pleasing in Thy sight. May love be revived in

us, and benevolence, and kindness, and a readiness to deny ourselves and make sacrifices, the one for the other. Lord ! grant that every one of the youth here, may find his friends in health and prosperity, and that the anticipated intercourse with them may benefit his character.

Bless, O Lord, all benevolent societies. Bless the cause of Bibles ; grant that Thy Word may be spread over the whole earth. Be with the missionaries of the Cross.

It is never more difficult to have religion exercise its due influence over us, than during times of pleasure and recreation. When we kneel down to pray, when we visit the house of God, when we read the Bible, or when we are engaged in the calls of duty, we naturally feel serious and piously inclined ;—but when we are in the midst of cheerfulness, when we enter a circle of joyous and lively company, who would expect us then to think seriously of God and our obligations to Him ? Pleasure will then be the only subject of our thoughts ; and many enter society, in order to forget not only the cares and anxieties of life for a time, but also the serious claims of duty and the warnings of religion and conscience.

It is for this reason, that some who love religion, whose delight it is to meditate on the salvation of souls and on the means by which to secure it, look upon the most innocent pleasures as something

abominable, and consider themselves safer and better and more holy, in proportion as they are abstemious and austere, and live remote from the pleasures of the world. But this view does not proceed from the spirit of the Gospel of Christ. Heaven and earth, religion and our daily employments, time and eternity, are not to be disconnected, not to be separated, but they are to form a whole, whose parts, animated by the same spirit, may pass over easily the one into the other. Whatever view lays particular stress on one part of Christian life to the exclusion of another, is and always must be erroneous; hence Christ recommends neither Stoicism nor Epicurism, for both are extremes and exclusive.

The Lord has implanted in man a desire for pleasure, which it would be no less sinful to root out than to make it the mainspring of all our wishes and actions. It is this desire—which is identical with the irresistible desire to live—that fills our markets with all kinds of articles, to adorn life and render it comfortable; that sets thousands of hands in motion, brings men of different climes together, and unites nation with nation; that imperceptibly, yet powerfully, stirs every inclination and every instinctive talent in man, and draws out what would otherwise never appear; that searches for every good the earth conceals in its bowels, for every beauty nature offers, and for all that may delight the ear, or the eye, or rejoice the

heart of man. Without this desire the ocean would forever have separated the different portions of the world; the fulness and riches of the productions of the earth, would not have been made known; and the bountiful goodness of God, which has endowed man with so much ingenuity, with so many different powers and talents and capacities for all kinds of mechanical and fine arts, would have remained hidden from our dull and inactive eyes, and we should have lived like the brute, slovenly and satisfied with coarse food and the fur taken from the animal.

Yet while this desire is entitled to our attention, we must not suffer it to reign over us, nor indulge it in opposition to duty or the claims of religion. As little as we should be different persons in the Church and in common life, so little should we be different persons in the closet at private prayer and in the social circle. Religion is to penetrate all our feelings, to sanctify all our thoughts, to correct our erroneous views, and to reign over all our resolutions and actions; it is not to be a mere ceremony, that makes us feel holy on sacred days and in sacred places, but religion is to be our constant companion and guide; nor can it be profaned by introducing it into our lives and into all the relations of life, for its power is stronger than any other, and no pleasure will be dangerous nor any occupation sinful, when religion devises it, and always remains present with us; for then, whether

we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we will do all to the honor of God.

The nearness of the days of recreation and pleasure, to which every one connected with these Institutions is looking forward, has guided me in the choice of my subject. All of you anticipate with much delight a vacation that follows a long and laborious session, and it will be more easy to enlist your interest in a subject corresponding with your present feelings, than in one that might be entirely foreign to them. The words on which I intend basing my discourse may, however, remind you of a question not a little discussed at present; but to keep everything away from the minds of my hearers, that might cause them to expect remarks which will not be introduced, I would state before reading my text, that I shall leave that question entirely unnoticed.

You will find the words of my text in the second chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, from the 1st to the 11th verse.

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called, and his disciples to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you do it. And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler

of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants which drew the water knew), the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse : but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory ; and his disciples believed on him.

The truth which I wish to establish from these words, is this : *We may enjoy the pleasures of social intercourse, and if we do so in a proper manner, they will aid in the formation of character.*

I. The first part of my proposition it will be easy to prove ; for here we have Christ's example given in a striking way. Christ was Himself frequently present at festivals, and in large societies ; for He was far from that pride, which seeks for particular holiness by separating itself from the social circles of joy and mirth. He was not only present on such occasions, but made no distinctions between the persons who invited Him. Whether it was a publican, like Levi, that prepared a great feast for Him, or a proud Pharisee, that besought Him to dine with him, He would go and be called a friend of publicans and sinners, a man gluttonous and a winebibber, rather than in a repulsive way slight kindness and polite attention.

So He went to the marriage feast in Cana, at a time when many a one of us would have hesitated and doubted the propriety of doing so. For it was immediately after His own baptism, when the Spirit

of God had descended like a dove and remained upon Him ; it was when He had gathered the first disciples, and when the heavens had opened and angels ascended and descended upon the Son of Man ; it was therefore immediately after hours of deep impressions on the disciples, after hours of a very close communion with God, that Christ took them into a cheerful and joyous company. Would not many of us have feared to profane those holy hours by so great a contrast ? or would not all of us have feared, lest the general joyousness which is the universal companion of such a feast, might obliterate the new impressions before they could sink deep into the hearts of the disciples ? Christ, our model in all things, went ; He did not ask, whether or not the people would consider His dignity as the Messiah, as a teacher, as a holy and wise person, offended ; He went, and John, who records faithfully whatever seemed important in the conversations of Christ, was certainly not struck with any remarkable sayings of the Saviour on that occasion, or else he would have taken some notice of them, especially as he is the only one that has recorded this wedding and Christ's presence at it. No doubt Christ entered fully into the joyousness of the guests, whose minds at that time could not have been in a fit state to listen to doctrines of wisdom ; no doubt He participated in their cheerful conversations, and added His own share to heighten the pleasures of the

company, and to raise the cheerfulness of the newly wedded pair by exhibiting the tender and sympathizing interest of a friend.

There is in the whole conduct of Christ, on this occasion, not a trace of that pride which would, in a nice yet perceptible way, make the company feel how much He honored it by His presence; no desire to render Himself prominent, no embarrassment, no fear lest He should profane His sacred and holy calling on earth, by being in a mirthful company; no talkativeness, that does not suffer others to be heard; no desire to show learning, and manifest wisdom; nothing that might have been calculated to make the society feel that one infinitely more holy than all who ever lived in human form, was among them. Christ was not an enemy to the joys of life. Those who constantly frown down every harmless and innocent amusement, mistake the character of the Christian religion, and strip it of one of its greatest beauties—of its liberality and cheerfulness.

Another proof of the first part of my proposition, is the miracle which Christ wrought. For if we ask what the true aim of the miracle wrought by the Saviour, during the wedding in Cana, may have been, we shall be reduced to but one answer that can satisfy us. Whenever we see Christ work miracles, He has one of two purposes in view: either to benefit his fellow-men directly—to remove distress, gratify a real want, or to introduce by them and

attach to them, a course of instruction, some religious remarks or important doctrines. But neither of these two purposes is the object of the miracle mentioned in the text. For, though the embarrassment of the newly-married pair must have been painful, because they had either not calculated on so large a company, or, for other reasons, had not procured a supply large enough for the wants of their guests, this was not of sufficient importance to call forth the divine assistance of our Saviour. It appears clearly, too, that the guests had on the whole been well supplied. Nor can it be said correctly, on the other hand, that the immediate object of the miracle was the glory of God or the introduction of religious instruction, for this might have been effected by different means, had no other reasons made this miracle desirable. In addition to all this, it must be remarked that the miracle was wrought without the knowledge of the guests.

Nothing is left, therefore, except the ingenious interpretation of a great commentator, which will solve all difficulties. The first disciples of Christ were all of them originally disciples of John the Baptist, who considered a life of abstinence, of self-denial, of solitude, the only correct one, and therefore condemned all the pleasures enjoyed by the world. In this respect, as in many others, John exhibited the effects of the law, and, as an external observance of commandments and external means of holiness, are much sooner and more readily re-

ceived by men than the principle of internal sanctification, his disciples no doubt shared his views and put considerable stress upon them. Now, when the Saviour led them, at the very outset of His Divine ministry, to a festival, they could not help wondering at it. Christ, to suppress every improper thought in them—to remove the possibility of drawing a comparison between Himself and John,—confirmed His views of life by an appropriate miracle, which required a power as much superior to all human strength as that of Christ was greater than that of John.

Thus Christ silenced at once all objections, all reproachful judgments; for now He revealed to them His Divine power in support of His views on the pleasures and joys of life. This purpose of the miracle was worthy of the Saviour. For, ever since men have meditated on religion, there have been those who were anxious to gain heaven by their own good works, by self-inflicted chastisements, by a reclusive life; and here we need not think only of the Hindoo devotees, who live on fallen leaves, on roots, and the like, and remain for years chained to a single spot; the Christian Church in all ages can furnish us with similar examples. Christ leads His own not into solitude, but into the midst of society; not to moroseness, but to cheerfulness; not to want and poverty, but to riches and wealth; and the wine He gave to His friends at the marriage feast, is but a foretaste of the wine of salva-

tion and eternal bliss which He will pour out to His own in Heaven.

II. In passing over to the latter part of my proposition, namely, that *social pleasures will aid in the formation of character*, let it be understood that I speak only of the *social* enjoyments of life; hence I need not classify pleasures, so as to exclude some entirely, and admit others as innocent and harmless. Without dwelling, therefore, on this point, I shall prove the assertion by answering the question: *How shall we enjoy social pleasures?*

I answer, in the first place, with *moderation and dignity*. When His mother tells the Saviour that they had no wine, He answers: *My hour is not yet come*. There can scarcely be any doubt that Mary expected her son to relieve the bridal pair of an unpleasant embarrassment, and that the Saviour Himself was willing to do so; yet He tells her: *Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come!* Some think that the hour Christ speaks of was the one appointed by the Father; others, that the Saviour desired first to cast a glance at the company, in order to ascertain whether their state would admit of an additional bounty; others, finally, that He delayed the miracle till near the hour when the guests would depart, according to the regular custom. However we may explain the language, Christ exhibits great moderation and caution. He shows no anxiety to manifest

His great and Divine power, to excite the astonishment of the guests and gain their admiration; He performs the miracle not only at His own hour, but also unseen by all, except John the Evangelist and the servants.

How very different is this with us! Frequently, when our minds are excited, we are unable to moderate ourselves or appear with dignified calmness; if we imagine ourselves possessed of a talent or an agreeable quality, we burn with desire to exhibit it in society; if we have some knowledge, or if any occurrences of our lives seem to be in the least remarkable, we will constantly be ready to have others made acquainted with them. We are always anxious to make ourselves prominent, and by our talkativeness and untimely ambition, we often prevent those better informed than ourselves, from being heard. If we succeed in all this, our cheerfulness is apt to pass beyond the bounds of propriety and politeness and dignity; our wit, if we have any, becomes sharp at the expense of others; our judgment decisive and dogmatical; and thinking only of ourselves, we not unfrequently convert the room appointed for general social intercourse, into the arena of rude and impolite dispute about trifling things. If, on the other hand, we are disappointed, we lock our hearts, take no interest in anything going on around us, are neither willing to converse nor to listen, but brood over our disap-

pointed expectations, and consume the hours of expected pleasure in silent vexation.

If then, to enjoy social pleasures, we must bridle our selfish feelings, it follows, that social intercourse must have a favorable influence upon the formation of character.

To enjoy social pleasures rightly, *we must possess those virtues, which adorn the character of humanity everywhere.* Fashions and customs differ, not only in different nations, but also in the same nation at different times. They are neither to be despised, nor to be valued too highly; yet on the whole it will never dishonor any one, if he should ignorantly offend a fashion. But if any one who enters a social circle, is not adorned with moral virtues, if his disposition is low, his character unprincipled, his views offensive, he cannot enjoy himself at all, much less in the proper spirit. Disorderly passions, vehement desires, are the destroyers of social pleasures. The mere presence of one individual, indulging such a state of mind, poisons the joyousness of a whole circle and deadens all longing for entertainment in every cheerful heart. How can there be free social intercourse or true enjoyment, where envy and jealousy look upon superior talent, or wealth, or beauty, with malignant eyes; where malice listens for every word its victim may speak; and wit is ready to inflict wounds that never heal, whenever an opportunity presents itself? Or how can there be true pleasure where the tongue of slander con-

tinually stains the honor of absent ones, where only the faults of our fellow-men are the favorite themes of conversation, but their virtues are never sought for, or if discovered, are carefully hidden. Yet the mere absence of those monsters of an evil disposition, is not enough; we must neither be cold nor repulsive, neither insensible, nor inattentive, nor indifferent. To say all in a word, we must enter the social circle with true and genuine benevolence, or else we cannot enjoy ourselves, nor gratify the just desires of others for entertainment.

Here also, Christ is our model. He perceives the situation of the family in which He tarries, and—whatever else His object may have been in working the miracle—He is ready to assist them, and relieve them of an unpleasant embarrassment. No feeling was too insignificant to receive His sympathy; but every suffering, every joy, every emotion of the human heart, could claim His interest. And how can men render each other happy, unless they cherish benevolence and sympathize with each other? To live with our fellow-men, to meet with them for social recreation, and yet to take no interest in their occupations, in their undertakings, expectations, and hopes, their sufferings and joys, at once obstructs the current of all enjoyment. Look upon a circle in which no one of those who form it, is willing to forget himself, to resign his selfishness for a moment, in which every one thinks only of his own plans and cares, and favorite

notions, and speaks of nothing with real animation and interest, unless it has some bearing upon himself, and you will soon see a feeling of emptiness and weariness taking possession of the whole company, and every one will be anxious to have it broken up. But what life must enter into such a circle, if everything that concerns man in general is interesting to us; when we listen with pleasure to the joys and griefs of others, and by our sympathies brighten the one and lighten the other; when each one forgets himself, and with genuine benevolence of heart, is anxious to oblige others. Such benevolence is the strength and power of true politeness.

If then, to enjoy social pleasures, we must exercise genuine benevolence, it follows, that social intercourse has a favorable influence upon the formation of character.

To enjoy ourselves rightly in a social circle of friends, *we must possess a cultivated mind*. To converse, especially to converse well, demands much knowledge, a highly cultivated imagination, and great flexibility of mind. The mere sensual pleasure of eating and drinking is worth but little; the occurrences of the day are soon exhausted in conversation, and the state of the weather may be agreed on in a few minutes. But conversation is to continue, and unless we have clear and distinct notions of those things that are generally interesting—of the nature of man, of his destination, his

occupations, his most important concerns, of history and of distant countries—we will tire out our companions very soon. He who does not possess a well-disciplined and well-stored mind, a mind, that is docile and desirous to communicate handsomely what it possesses, and a well-cultivated taste that delights in the productions of art, must be either a burden to himself or to society. He will sit, either without speaking a word or, if he opens his lips, something insipid or trifling may be expected. The true art of conversation presupposes rich stores of valuable knowledge, much cultivation and a lively interest in everything good and innocent and beautiful; but above all a fine taste, which never can be acquired without much pains, and which alone will prevent us, on the one hand, from selecting subjects too trifling, and on the other, from becoming pedantic. The empty head cannot possibly derive any true enjoyment from social intercourse; fine allusions, beauty of expression, generalizing remarks, are not understood by the uncultivated; wit loses its point, and nothing can secure their interest except what pertains to their immediate neighborhood.

If then the enjoyment of social pleasures, demands much valuable knowledge, and if knowledge is desirable, it must follow, that social intercourse aids in the formation of character.

To enjoy social pleasures rightly, *we must not suffer them to occupy too much attention beforehand.*

Pleasure cannot be secured by methodical arrangements or systematical calculations. Pleasure is a free guest, and most frequently enters when least expected. It is not the fruit of artificial means, nor can it be purchased with money. You cannot lay hold of joy by pursuing it, nor can you chain it down by your determination to retain it. A festival, that is entirely artificial in its origin, that does not proceed from a longing of our whole nature for it, is like an artificial flower. It looks like real festivity, but the life of it is wanting; it blooms like a real flower, but has no reviving fragrance. Pleasures and joys are the free gifts of Heaven; and all we can do on our part, is to render ourselves worthy of them by regular and conscientious activity. Then they will be true recreations; then little will be required to rejoice our hearts. If we are greatly fatigued after persevering labors, we will enjoy rest anywhere; if we feel exhausted from the heat of the day, the shade a tree offers, will be a greater luxury than the coolest marble hall to the voluptuary. If we have suffered long from thirst, we will receive the simplest drink with delight; if hunger sharpens the appetite, we will not long for artificial cookery.

To render ourselves worthy of social pleasures, conscientious activity is therefore one of their most necessary conditions. Christ did not commence His divine work on earth by thinking of pleasures, but by collecting disciples. If pleasure is the sole

object of life, we will be in pursuit of our own shadow which it will be impossible to grasp, for we will thus destroy our capacity for enjoyment; we will desire drink when we have no thirst, and rest when we are not fatigued.

If, then, to enjoy social pleasures rightly, we must accustom ourselves to a conscientious activity, it must follow, that social intercourse serves to benefit our character.

To enjoy social pleasures rightly, *we must try to carry away with us a pleasant remembrance, when we leave the circle.* In this respect, also, Christ is our model. He parted with His friends not only without a reproach, but with true joy and delight, for He had rendered them more happy by His presence, and Himself worthy of their gratitude and blessings; He had revealed His glory and secured the regard of His disciples, for it is said, His disciples believed on Him.

How different is the feeling with which men return from dissipations, when perhaps they have done in one hour of excitement what will mar the peace and joy of their whole life, when they have given offence to those who least of all deserved it, or when they have disturbed the peace of an individual or a whole family. While they are enjoying themselves, they have no time to examine what they say and what they do, but after returning at a late hour in the evening, they cannot help reflecting on all that has taken place; then the offence

given to others will recoil upon themselves and take hold of their own hearts; then the close of the evening will become an hour of account and judgment; and how little will any pleasure be worth if it leaves a sting behind?

One of our principal cares ought therefore to be, that our whole conduct, every word and every action, be pleasant and inoffensive to all present. But above all, *Christians* should never forget their own honor and that of their Master. Their whole life is to be a continued witness of their Lord; hence they must preserve their full dignity, their entire superiority over all sensual dangers and temptations; and with ease they must be able to connect the highest with the lowest, labor with recreation, activity with rest, heaven with earth, and a due interest in the temporal welfare of their friends with a deep interest in the welfare of their immortal souls. If at any time they have cause to regret what they have said or done, all their pleasure is converted into bitterness; for of them it is expected, that their eyes will look up through all the enjoyments of earth to the Giver of them in heaven.

If, then, to enjoy social pleasures rightly, we must be watchful and preserve our dignity as men and Christians, it must follow, that social intercourse serves to benefit our character.

To enjoy social pleasures rightly, *we must possess*

personal piety. In the world we see associated with each other strength and weakness, truth and error, virtue and vice, rest and labor, hope and despair, *joy* and *grief*. Now we long for a pleasure but cannot obtain it, and again, when it is granted to us, we can no more enjoy it; now we cannot have what we need, and again, when we feel no desire nor want, we have an abundance. The joys which life on earth offers us, are like oases in a sterile desert; there is no transition from joy to joy, no continuance, no connection, but all pleasures are followed by languor; all our joys by some degree of sadness; every feeling of interest by that of indifference. The world, it is true, can give us single, isolated joys, a thousand pleasures and entertainments, but it cannot free us from disappointment and vexations. The long-anticipated pleasure passes by more quickly than it arrives, and often leaves us less satisfied than we were before. Gloomy days follow the days of cheerfulness, and we cannot help exclaiming, even in our early youth, *All is vanity!*

But if we have piety, if we rejoice in Christ, we shall have real joy, joy which does not change nor vary, which is the same under all circumstances, even in sickness and misfortune. This joy is a general feeling of well-being, of peace and happiness within. Without it there can be no true delight; no pleasure will be a true pleasure, nor any joy a real enjoyment: with it we tread on blooming paths wherever we set our feet, and enjoy

festivals without appointing special days for them. As there is no truth independent of *the* Truth ; as there is no beauty independent of beauty as such ; so there is no joy independent of joy in Christ. The heart is an instrument, which is touched by all the occurrences of the day ; if an instrument is out of tune, the finest melody will be unmusical and offensive ; if it is well tuned, if every string is pure and harmonizes with all the others, even discords will pass over easily into harmonies and enhance their beauty and sublimity. The heart is in tune when we have joy in Christ, when this joy overshadows our whole being, breathes peace into all our relations and gives rest to our bosom. The stormy days will be in harmony with the calm days, and every cloud that crosses the serene sky above us will only heighten its beauty. Then we shall feel assured that a kind Father rules over us, that the love of Christ atones for our sins, and that even every disappointment in life will bear wholesome fruit.

Hence, if you desire to enjoy social pleasures rightly, embrace religion, for it alone imparts that joy which will accompany us everywhere, unite the many isolated pleasures which the world affords into one whole, and connect earth with heaven.

My young friends ! In addressing you so shortly before the ensuing vacation, I know full well and feel deeply how great your anticipations are, how

fondly you look for the day and the hour, when after a separation of many months, you will again meet your parents, brothers and sisters, and the friends of your home ; when you will enjoy your season of recreation in the house of your birth—in those places, all of which are marked each by some particular occurrence of your childhood. Where could rest be more sweet, or recreation more cheerful, or pleasure more innocent, than in the circle of relatives—of those who are dearest and nearest to us on earth ? The delight of parents, whose sons are growing up in knowledge, in virtue, and in all that adorns man ; the gratification of good sons with this delight and satisfaction of their parents ; the interest of kind relatives, and the tender participation of family friends in these sacred joys ;—all is pure, leaving not a trace of regret and surpassing by far every other pleasure. All these scenes are before you. The anticipated joy beats in your hearts, sparkles in your eyes, speaks in all your motions, and pervades all your remaining studies, attends every step, and all your walks. I rejoice with you sincerely ; and whilst I wish that all your anticipations may be realized, that you may recruit your energies, restore your health, and that each of you may have a full share of the bountiful goodness of God, I would at the same time beg you to consider this ensuing time of recreation in its proper light.

First of all, then, thank God for His goodness,

that He has surrounded you with the ties of love and kindred, that during your absence He has preserved your parents and friends, that you may meet them instead of their silent graves; thank Him, that he has blessed many of your friends, and permits you to return once more to see those again whom you so much love.

But again: ask yourselves, what will be the expectations with which your parents will receive you? What will their hearts desire to know concerning you? Will they not long to discover virtues which you had not when they saw you last? Will they not expect to see your faults corrected, your knowledge increased, your manners improved, and a determined resolution to form a solid character, and become useful members of society? Will they not be anxious to see you sincere followers of Christ, that you may become an honor to yourselves, to your families, to the Church, and to your country? Will your parents rejoice in your presence, if they cannot discover anything of all this? And would not a disappointment be the most cutting reproach to you, and take away every joy and every pleasure from your hearts?

Finally, I would beg you to revive the noble principles that your fathers and mothers early inculcated upon you, and which are too easily lost sight of, when you are left very much to yourselves. Gratitude and affection render us teachable. We regard easily the entreaties of those whom we love. Do not return

therefore merely to add pleasure to pleasure; but let every enjoyment have a tendency to fortify good principles, to exercise every virtue and render you more anxious to improve the time of youth, that in your advanced age you may resemble the tree, all of whose twigs are laden with good and wholesome fruits. For it is the true and only purpose of family relations and family intercourse, to awaken and draw out every power of our minds, to refine our manners, and cultivate our hearts, that we may become mild and tender and loving. We are to learn to regard each other, and be taught the duties of obedience, the sacrifices of love, the virtues of confidence, truth, and mutual affection; and we are to assist each other in preparing for usefulness on earth and for blessedness in heaven.

THE INNER LIFE A SONG OF PRAISE.*

EPH. 5 : 19.

“Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

LORD, our Heavenly Father! Thou art Light and Holiness, but we are sinners! Whatever is good and noble proceeds from Thee and has its origin in Thee; but whatever is evil and sinful, takes its rise in our hearts and flows forth from them into our thoughts and words and actions. Thou givest what is good, but we abuse it; and make it a source of evil. All Thy laws, Lord! are good and perfect; Thy institutions and commandments are good and tend to the welfare of all created beings; but we, Lord! dishonor them, we disobey them, violate them, and thus change the intended source of bliss into a curse to ourselves,

* Preached at the dedication of an organ in the German Reformed Church, City of Frederick, Md., on the 25th of August, 1839. Rev. Dr. Zacharias, who was and still is the Pastor of this Church, says in a letter of September 10th, 1856, that he well remembers “the occasion and the impression which the sermon made upon the people. Dr. Rauch was earnestly solicited to furnish a copy for publication, which he finally promised to do after a revision, but his health and the pressure of other labors prevented him from carrying out his kind purpose.”—Ed.

and into a fountain of misery. This, Lord, is our guilt, that we abuse Thy gracious goodness and do not acknowledge Thee as the Author and Ruler of the Universe, and do not love Thee as our Benefactor and Preserver.

We would thank Thee, Lord! this morning, for Thy continued goodness and mercy towards us. Thou hast protected us from many dangers, and hast granted us what we stood in need of—health and strength, food and clothing, and the full use of all our mental and moral faculties. While many of our fellow-beings have been cut off, Lord! Thou hast preserved us and privileged us to see the light of another Sabbath, to read Thy holy word and listen to it as it is preached to us.

But, Lord! while we render Thee our thanks, we must confess in deep humility our lukewarmness in Thy service. We have not always been grateful for the many tokens of Thy goodness and mercy; we have not been zealous to promote Thy kingdom on earth nor been faithful to our promise, to go from work to work and live only to Thee; we have not listened to Thy calls, but our love has been cold, and our faith weak. We pray, Lord! that Thou wilt increase our love and faith, and grant us that disposition, which will render Thy service an easy, a joyful, and pleasant work.

O Lord! do Thou change the dissonances of our life into harmony, our slavery to sin into the liberty of the Spirit, our lukewarmness into anima-

tion and devotion, our despondency into cheerfulness, and our enmity into love.

Grant that we may never sing to idols, but that to Thee alone we may sing and make melody in our hearts. Introduce these songs into our lives, and let them be our chief delight. May our whole life on earth be one uninterrupted song, whose theme shall be Thy glory and power and honor.

Bless Thy Church here and in all countries. May Thy word proceed from it in all its glory and prove a blessing to all who hear it. Bless the labors of all who are engaged in spreading Thy kingdom, and grant them the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit.

Singing to the Lord is nothing else than a fervent prayer. The Christian Church in its earliest stages sang not only Psalms and Hymns, but also Prayers, as, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, the Confession of Faith, the Gospels and Epistles. Whatever fills the heart, will naturally flow forth from it. As the bird sings its little song, when it feels pleasantly, when morning breezes invigorate it, and the rising sun changes the dewdrops into diamonds—as it sings, leaping joyfully from twig to twig, so our grief as well as our joy will break forth into songs, and these songs will relieve our bosom and render its emotions more mild. To the first Christians, the sufferings of the Saviour, His love, His inimitable nobleness of character, were more new, more striking than to us. We hear the Saviour

spoken of from our earliest youth, and we become accustomed to His excellence and beauty as we become accustomed to the daily sight of brilliant sunsets; but suppose we had never heard of a Saviour's love and sufferings, or suppose we had grown up without ever having seen the beauties of a sunrise—what would be their effect upon us? We would at first be astonished, amazed; but when recovering ourselves, our hearts would overflow with a sense of such love and glory in a song of praise. To sing, it is not necessary that we should even move the lips; we may sing in our hearts; we may sing while we walk along the street and are in the sight of all men; we may sing, when we praise anything with admiration and love, when we speak of it with rapture. Without knowing it our language becomes more rhythmical, its figures more delicate and select, its turns and expressions more poetical. We may sing, when we meditate silently on the goodness of God, or when we pray in our closet.

Solomon, in early times already, connected instrumental music with singing; and this also was natural. For what songs cannot express, what the language of man cannot convey by words, instrumental music succeeds in bringing to the perception of every one. It renders manifest our deepest feelings and emotions; now it attunes its strings to our joy, then to our grief; and as its sounds steal upon the ear, as its sweet melodies find their way

to our hearts, we are filled with melody ourselves ; our wild passions are hushed, and we are prepared to listen with much more delight to the truth as it is announced to us. The words of Plato are well known : the melancholy sounds of the flute, he said, reminded him of his eternal home, and filled his soul with irresistible longing for something better than he could find on earth. It is known, too, that when the celebrated Haydn composed his *Creation*, he felt so devotional, so fervent, that frequently during the progress of the composition, his own melodies would make the tears start into his eyes, would bend his knees and move his lips to offer a prayer to the Lord. It is known, too, that the same composer, when once an audience, enraptured by his noble melodies, applauded him, rose up, and lifting his hands, trembling with age, exclaimed, with his eyes raised to Heaven : Before Him bow yourselves ; to Him alone the honor is due.

But if this be so with profane music and common instruments, how much greater must be the effect of the sounds and melodies, that flow forth from that instrument, which for five centuries has been devoted exclusively to religious purposes. Its full, sonorous sounds, rising from the deepest to the highest ; its notes, so pure that no earthly agency seems to produce them ; its power, that bursts upon our ears like a hurricane of melodies and harmonies, now overpowering us and again raising us by the softest and most gentle tones ;—all serve

to make the organ that instrument which, more than any other, is set apart to sacred use—as an accompaniment of our prayers and religious songs. If some sad and mournful one, distressed in mind, comes into the house of God, and there hears the choir, guided by the strong and full sounds of the organ, sing the words :

“Come, ye disconsolate, where’er ye languish,”

will he not feel soothed at once and resigned and silenced? Will he not feel as if angels were approaching him in these sounds, and bringing heavenly consolation? And when the man who has not yet repented, sits under the powerful sounds of this sacred instrument, will he not feel as if every note, every melody, were tearing open a wound in his heart, and reminding him of his transgressions; will these notes not serve to soften his heart and give him a yielding disposition? Many an impenitent man has acknowledged, that sacred music affected him more than the best sermon; that he received his first impressions while listening to a sacred song or melody. And this is rational. The Lord may use many ways to teach the sinner, but music, sacred music above all, seems to be accompanied by an irresistible power. It seems to silence our desires, to subdue our obstinacy, to render us tractable and ready to yield for awhile our own views and opinions. Hence it is that, as far as our knowledge extends,

we see all nations making use of some kind of song and music in their divine worship.

With these views on music, I shall consider to-day *the manner in which we ought to sing to the Lord*. In considering it, I hope to prove at the same time, that the life of the Christian is cheerful, and accompanied constantly by a heavenly music, which directs his steps and determines all his movements. The true song to the Lord is a consistent Christian life.

Singing, in the first place, must be *an easy work*, without visible effort and labor. Yet all of us cannot sing; nor can any one sing whenever he chooses, but even those who sing well at one time cannot at another. On what does this difference depend? If we would sing easily, our hearts must overflow with deep emotions; we must be animated by them; they must move our lips and flow forth into sounds. To sing without animation, is an irksome task, a slavish work; it is like speaking when we have no thoughts to communicate—like emitting sounds without feeling—like making motions with the lips without corresponding emotions of the heart. But when our bosom beats high; when without thinking much and without any effort on our part, feelings are breathed into sounds; when what is inclosed in the heart, exciting joy and delight and hope, strives to break forth and demands utterance;—then singing will be easy,

and exercise a heavenly and unknown power not only on those around us but also on ourselves.

This then we have to notice first, that unless we are moved to sing from within, the song of our lips will be without life ; as little as one who has no music in his heart, can either enjoy it when heard, or succeed in learning it, so little can any one sing, whose heart is not full of song. If he sings nevertheless, his song will be like a painted rose, which indeed resembles a living one, but has neither its life, nor the freshness of its colors, nor the sweetness of its fragrance. The fulness of the heart must send the sounds to the lips ; they must only repeat what the heart has sung already ; they must only convey to the ear what excites and moves the bosom. Every one who sings is aware of this. His voice is cramped, does not come forth freely and fully, when he is expected to sing against his inclination. But when he loves a song, then he pours his whole soul into his voice, and it will be pleasant and lovely. Hence it is evident that we may sing without opening the lips, and that we can sing well only when that which moves the heart, is the theme to which we sing.

Let us illustrate this truth by a few examples. When on a beautiful summer's eve, a crowd of little children to whom care and trouble are strangers, merrily and joyfully raise their tender voices to a song, we will admit that singing is to them an easy work, and will also admit that they sing not to

Him, to whom their song is due, but to the intense pleasure of a careless existence, which is not harassed, neither from within nor from without, by anything disagreeable. The past does not trouble them, and the future, if it presents itself at all, lies before them like a blooming May-day.

Or when once, full of despondency, the soldiers of Frederick the Great faced the enemy and, just before entering the battle, raised a song to the Lord of their own accord, it was confidence in Him who guides the fate of nations as well as those of individuals, and reliance on their good cause, that inspired the song. Such a song is easy; it streams forth from the bosom as water from the fountain, and quickens both those that sing and those that hear.

Or when, after many years of scarcity, perhaps of famine, the chiming of bells announces the slow approach of the groaning wain, richly laden with the first-fruits of an abundant harvest; when then all stream into the house of God, what is it that takes them there? A desire to sing the song of their hearts. The sounds of the organ swell higher and higher; they fill the edifice and fill every heart in it with intense delight; the choir takes the lead, and the free, easy and joyful song of the crowded assembly rises like sweet incense to Heaven, bearing on its symphonies the gratitude and love of a grateful people. They sing from their hearts, and sing to the Lord!

To sing with ease presupposes, then, that we are absorbed in a great emotion, and to sing to the Lord, that we love Him—that His Spirit lives and dwells in our hearts, and streams forth from thence into our feelings, thoughts, words, and actions. Our hearts must be full of devotion and reverence. Not from mere custom and habit are we to sing to the Lord now and then, but always, because the Spirit of the Lord is powerful in us, and fills our hearts and moves our lips with love. Then songs will rise of themselves, and will be the free effusion of our hearts, that, dwelling before the throne of God, admiring His holiness and majesty, rejoice in secret communion with the Father of all.

But can we sing thus, if our life is not devoted to the Lord? Can we sing thus, if our will is in opposition to that of the Redeemer? As long as the schism in our nature continues; as long as we are drawn partly towards the earth and only partly towards Heaven, so long we cannot sing in the right spirit; for, to sing in the right spirit, we must live in the right spirit. The lips that curse God and man cannot sing of love, as little as hands stained with crime, can clasp each other for prayer. To sing with ease and in the right spirit, our minds must constantly rise heavenward, must be disposed to go from work to work, and follow the call of duty without delay whithersoever it may lead.

If you say that singing in the text means to praise the Lord, I agree with you. But the ways

in which we may praise the Lord are different ; and there is no praise more acceptable to Him than that which consists in doing His will and in living for His purposes. That this kind of praise is meant here, appears from the whole connection.

Singing, in the second place, if it shall be easy, *requires a great deal of practice*. When any one is learning to sing, he finds that all the sounds which lie in his throat are easy and natural to him ; but others are at first difficult. To become a singer, however, he must conquer these difficulties, for all sounds must be at his command.

Thus it is with the Christian who desires to sing to the Lord. His whole life ought to be one uninterrupted song ; but to have it so, many difficulties are to be overcome. It is easy for us to do the will of the Lord, when His commandments correspond to our wishes and desires and inclinations. It is our duty, for example, to gather property, to provide for our families, to take care of our health, to love our children and parents ; the fulfilment of such duties is easy and pleasant in most instances. But when we are commanded to give what we have to the Lord, to sell all our property and follow Christ, to love Christ more than father and mother, wife and sister, brother and child : then our hearts feel little inclined to sing to the Lord ; then the mind grows dull, our hearts cold, our senses obtuse, and our hands negligent. Then it

appears that our souls are not altogether where our calling is, our hearts not where our songs and prayers ought to be. To sing, therefore, with full confidence, we must learn to resign the world, and place our whole hope in God; we must learn to silence our selfish wishes and desires, and to subdue our most favorite inclinations, if they come into collision with the Divine will. We must, in a word, practise obedience towards God to such an extent, that we will rejoice in nothing but in fulfilling His will, in doing only what He commands, and in devoting ourselves wholly and entirely to His honor and glory.

Singing, in the third place, must be a *free effusion of the heart*. It must not be forced. The voice must not cling to the throat, but flow forth freely, to fill the ears that hear it. Yet while a free effusion, it is subject to laws, without which the simplest melody cannot be formed. Rousseau composed a little melody of but three notes; yet he could do so only by observing closely the rules according to which their position might be changed. No sooner are these laws violated, than dissonance, instead of melody and harmony, will be heard, and our offended ears will turn away with aversion. When, on the other hand, our *free* songs observe the laws of music, then, without any external power and force, by their own charms and beauties, they reign over our affections, purify them, weaken

or strengthen them, excite our emotions, and direct them whithersoever the sounds flow. A lively song will cheer us; a melancholy one will make us sad. None that sings and hears such a free but well-regulated song, can withstand its magic, gentle and yet irresistible power; unconsciously he will listen and turn himself towards the region from which the sounds reach his ears; and many a tear of melancholy or of joy has been elicited by a simple tune.

The nature of singing in general, is also the nature of our songs to the Lord. Freely and without any external pressure they must ascend as incense rising from our hearts, and yet they must follow the direction of certain laws. To sing to the Lord, is to serve the Lord; hence the nature of singing is to be that of serving the Lord. And here it is where most of us mistake true and genuine liberty. If I follow the law of God, I cannot execute my own will, and consequently cannot be free; and if I follow my own will, I imagine myself free, but do not sing to the Lord. This is the contradiction which will always disquiet us, until we acknowledge that true liberty does not exclude the law, but rests on it as its basis. As there is but one source of truth and but one source of light, so there is but one source of true liberty, and this source is the will of God. This will must become the soul and life of our will; as the light in falling upon the eye fills it, and as the eye longs

for the light, and can see only it and by it, so the will of God is to fill our will; so we are to love it, to long for it, and can be free only by it. Then all contradiction will be removed, when we freely and cheerfully unite our will to the Divine will, and thus sing to the Lord a free song, and yet one that is regulated by law. Such a song, such a life will make us truly free; when what is our duty becomes the theme of the songs in our hearts; when we obey, because we love to do so and could not do otherwise; when we listen to the Divine will, not as to a power that cannot be resisted, but because we acknowledge it to be the true friend to liberty; when what the will of God demands of us, becomes the demand of our own rational and regenerated wills;—then we shall be free; our song will be acceptable to the Lord, and will reign over us, and will govern all our feelings and thoughts and actions. Then the service of God will no longer be a dreary labor, forced upon us; but it will be a free and easy thing to serve Him whom we love—to be His who is ours—to rest in the bosom of Him who dwells in the hearts of those who believe in Him.

Singing, in the fourth place, must be *accompanied with joy*. When troubles and cares fill the breast, we do not feel much inclined to sing. But as soon as a ray of hope enlivens us the heart is relieved by song. We may sing, indeed, when we sorrow at the graves of our beloved friends, but we rejoice,

too, in the Lord, because He is our consolation and comfort in affliction. Singing and rejoicing cannot be separated ; if the one ever appear externally without the other, internally they nevertheless still cling together. There is a grief that is sweet and pleasant to man. There are tears sometimes in our eyes, while there is a smile on the face. In such grief our song may be sorrowful, our voice low and deep, yet we sing, because we rejoice in our submission to God—in our resignation or in our hope and expectation.

But how shall the Christian secure to himself the joy which is necessary to animate his singing to the Lord ?

The Christian is permitted to call Him a Father, who holds in His hand the whole world, as man does the scales in his : and shall he not rejoice ? The Christian can praise and adore Him, whom nature praises and all things that live in it : shall he not be happy and full of joy ? We who are but a link in the chain of beings, who are but a *step* of the great ladder of animated nature, we who are but dust and ashes, can send forth a sound into the great harmony of creation, which sings and praises the Lord in a continued and uninterrupted chorus : have we not a theme for our songs, worthy of our highest joy ? Whilst we adore the Lord, His praises re-echo from the heavens without number, from the hosts of suns, from the blooming earth, from the shining moon, from the sparkling stars,

from worlds and multitudes of creatures, that inhabit the stars and suns : is this thought not calculated to animate our songs to the Lord ? The Lord is our invisible Friend, with whom we can commune ; He is our Father, who knows all our circumstances, and what we need ; Christ our Saviour hears the expressions of our gratitude and submission, and He will hear the last sighs of our expiring life : what can there be, that should more effectually tune our hearts to a joyful song to the Lord ?

When beings whose glory it is to be created in the image of God, whose dignity, to imitate their Creator, and whose noble calling, to commune with their Saviour as with the friend of their bosom, cannot find words and tones to praise God, they must charge themselves with lukewarmness, with coldness, with dulness, and ingratitude. Whithersoever the eye turns, in every beauty of nature, in every product of the earth, we perceive the goodness of God ; but the Christian's hope and faith are not circumscribed by the horizon of his bodily eye ; they rove beyond the stars, where a happiness awaits him, that no eye has seen, and no ear has heard. If he does not bear the altar in his bosom, on which the flame of gratitude and love is never extinguished ; if he does not rejoice in the Lord, who freed him from the curse of sin and restored him to favor with God ; if he does not joyfully bless and praise and honor Him in song and in his

life;—he is worse than the heathen, who never forgets his imagined duty to the idols his own hands have made. It must not be so; every day must be with the Christian a holy day, a day of thanksgiving and adoration, of prayer and song; his heart must feel what his lips profess, and his lips must constantly be ready to pronounce, with joy and delight, the name of the Father and of the Son.

The source of the Christian's joy is a rich one: the stream flows without interruption, and it is fullest in seasons of need. Knowing that whatever may occur to him in life, comes from God, he is not only enabled to endure and conquer through Christ, but he discovers goodness and divine love, where others see darkness and despair. For, to those who love Christ and live in Him, He imparts a supernatural power, to know the truth better daily, to will what is right, to love the brethren, to conquer passion, and to resist temptation.

Singing, in the last place, must be full of *melody* and *harmony*. A monotonous song wearies the ear. Sounds seek each other; there is a power of attraction in them, an affinity that causes them to go in search of each other, and to seek that close union in which they are at rest. When many sounds of the same quality are thus connected and follow in a regular, measured succession, we have *melody*. In every melody the stronger

and the weaker, the lower and the higher, the darker and the clearer sounds relieve each other: though there is much variety, there is still union; and this union in the variety is Beauty.

The life of the Christian must possess *melody* also. The variety of his feelings and inclinations, of his thoughts and wishes, of his views and desires, of his resolutions and actions, must all of them tend to the same union and be governed by the same leading note, by the spirit of love, by a virtuous disposition. However different the situations may be in which he may find himself; however hard and severe the claims may be which life has upon him; whether ambition would decoy him or riches tempt him, whether his days flow on in pleasure or he must spend them in sorrow;—all must unite to make melody in his heart to the Lord. The Christian's heart is like an instrument: if the Spirit of the Lord breathe upon it, excite and move it, purify and animate it, the melody of his life will be lovely. But to say all in a word: godliness and holiness are the melodies that must reign in our lives: where one virtue is, there all the others must be. As there can be no melody, unless all the keys of an instrument are at our command, so there can be no godliness, unless all the virtues are exercised and all duties fulfilled—unless all our desires and passions are brought into subjection to the mind of Christ. There is an affinity in virtue much stronger than in chemical sub-

stances or in sounds; this affinity proceeds from the spirit which lives in all virtues, and which will certainly produce all, if any. If the tree is healthy and full of sap, all the branches will be laden with fruit.

Again : when sounds of different qualities are so united, that a well-regulated proportion exists between them, and that they exist, not in succession, not one after the other, but all at the same time, forming only one full and rich sound, we get what is called *harmony*. As melody prevents monotony, so does harmony prevent dissonance.

The Christian's song, his *life*, must be full of harmony. The Christian does not stand alone, but he must live in a family, as a member of his nation, and of the whole human race. Every person has his own views and peculiar desires; and there will be differences in every family, in every neighborhood, from time to time. Yet if there is a guiding tone, these differences will pass over into harmony. *Harmony* presupposes *differences*; striking the same key, we get only monotony; but striking a number of them at once, we get harmony, if they agree, though each of them differs from the other in strength, in height, and quality. This we ought to acknowledge in our daily intercourse. We ought not to expect that every one should think exactly as we do, for this would produce a lifeless monotony; all we ought to look for is the union of spirit and principle. If we accustom ourselves to consider every one entitled to

his own views, we will be willing to exchange or correct ours ; we will not look upon a mutual and free communication, even of opposite opinions, as offensive, for we will be convinced that we must live, not to our favorite notions, but to one great interest, before which all individual desires must give way. All men taken together form a *whole* ; all talents and all qualities are not united in one man, but distributed among many ; what the one has, another has not, whilst he in turn may have something which the former finds wanting in himself. But if all regard themselves as members of one whole, each one will supply the deficiency of the other ; and all together be like a beautiful tree, whose many branches form one crown. As a bed of flowers loses nothing but gains by its variety, when the brilliant carnation blooms by the side of the pure and white lily, when the dahlia mingles its branches and bursting buds with the proud calla of the Nile : so the different talents, qualifications and callings of men, their different views and wishes, form one great and beautiful whole, if they are all pervaded by the same spirit. And what is this spirit ? A spirit of love and of friendship. Where it reigns, there we shall have harmony ; but where envy and jealousy torture the minds of men, dissonance and confusion must be the inevitable consequence.

Be it so, then, that some of us speak in a low, others in a high tone, some in a gentle and soft, others in a harsh and rough voice ; if we but esteem and

regard each other, if instead of speaking unkindly, contradicting and opposing, we learn to speak *with* each other in love : then rough and soft voices will mingle harmoniously, and we will make music to the Lord without instruments. But how can we love our fellow-men, without loving Him, who first taught us to look upon all men as members of the same family ? Without Christ there is no harmony in families, none in nations, and none between us and God. As far as history can carry us back, we see the beginning of all national intercourse originate either in war which resulted in a state of peace, or in mercantile or some other selfish interest. Whenever this interest ceased, then the friendship called forth by it decayed.

If you ask, whence then shall harmony and peace of a permanent nature proceed ? We must answer, not from the sciences ; for though the truth of science is general, the instruments through whom this truth is exhibited become the pride of a nation, and awaken the envy and jealousy of others. Nor can this peace ever proceed from the arts ; for the mechanical arts have invented the cannon, the sword, and instruments of torture, and have rendered war and national hostility more terrible and more destructive than they ever were before. Nor can it proceed from the fine arts ; for though they live in the sphere of harmony and peace ; though it was the lyre of Orpheus which is said to have tamed wild animals ; they are nevertheless likewise calculated to call forth

disputes and jealousies. Do not England and France, Germany and Italy, Europe and America, even now claim each the highest rank in the department of literature and art? It is religion alone—the fear of the Lord whose bloom and fruit is the love of God, that can restore peace and harmony. Before the Lord we are all alike; none is richer before Him than the other; all of us are made of the same dust, all of us destined for the same eternal home. *One* truth there is and *one* love; one Saviour, and one Father of all; one way that leads to Heaven, one work to be done by all; one spirit, and one hope!

Singing, therefore, to the Lord, we will, we must produce harmony in our families, among our neighbors, in our nation, among all nations, and with Him from whom all peace and all harmony flows forth. And we may know that we do not sing to the Lord, but to passions and evil desires, when we cannot harmonize with our friends, nor with strangers!

Let this organ be the symbol of your lives, and of your intercourse with each other. As there are many pipes, of different tone and capacity, as there are some that will fill the whole edifice, and others so soft that they cannot be heard distinctly in full and sonorous harmonies, yet give sweetness to the whole, and are required to complete it,—so in your lives, the strong and the weak, the harsh and the soft, the tender and the stern, produce a lovely sound, only when they are united.

But consider, too, that it requires the hand of a

master, to elicit the slumbering melodies from this noble instrument. When the hand of the unlearned attempts to touch it, dissonance will issue forth from it, and grate on the ear; all sounds, let loose without order and proportion, will run through each other; no tone will lead the rest, but all will be confusion and disorder. So the human will is an instrument which the Spirit of the Lord alone can master. His Spirit alone can call forth lovely sounds and lovely melodies. But if passion or unholy desire takes the lead; if self-interest, envy, pride, or ambition attempt to govern our race, then there will be disunion; laws will be despised; and the state of the world will resemble the ocean, when waves rise upon waves, and all of them rush confusedly upon, and thus destroy each other.

In conclusion, let me entreat you not to forget to sing to the Lord. Turn your *whole* life into a melody to Him. You who believe—you who have entered into communion with Christ, do not grieve His Spirit, who is to be the light of your life. And you, who are still out of Christ, who have suffered all His previous calls thus far to pass by unnoticed, remember that those alone are happy whose hearts are pure; that peace cannot dwell in your hearts, unless you seek and find it in Christ; remember, too, that to serve the Lord is not a hard service, if we love Him; but it is a free, a joyful, an easy work, for He assists and aids us; it is a song that we sing to Him, a melody that we make to Him in our hearts!—Amen.

THE INNER LIFE A PILGRIMAGE.

PSALM 39 : 12:

“Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry ; hold not thy peace at my tears : for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.”

LORD, our heavenly Father ! we adore Thee as the eternal, infinite, unchangeable Lord and Father of all life. Thou alone art beyond all the changes of time ; from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God ; but we are reminded by every year as it passes, that we are constantly undergoing new changes ; that our faculties either increase in strength or decrease ; that all in and around us is mutable, and that nothing on this earth remains forever.

Every year, every day, every hour teaches us that we depend entirely on Thee ; that we exist only by Thy will ; that the minutes of our life are appointed by Thee ; our days pass by quickly, and every hour brings us nearer to eternity ; we are strangers on this earth ; we have no continuing city here ; we are pilgrims travelling to a distant country, and are permitted to sojourn on earth but for a time. But while we feel that we are

strangers here, may we feel, too, Lord! that we are called to be Thy citizens, citizens of the heavenly city, where there are no more changes; where time no longer reigns, but where happiness and joy will be uninterrupted and eternal. O, how pleasant the thought, that while we are pilgrims on earth and strangers, we are *Thy* pilgrims, for Thou hast revealed Thyself unto us; Thou hast shown us that while we are surrounded by a transitory world, there is a haven of rest and peace; an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away.

Lord! grant that none of us, hearing and reading Thy counsels, may suffer them to pass unheeded, but may we think on our ways and turn our feet unto Thy testimonies; may each one make haste, and delay not, to keep Thy commandments. Wilt Thou teach us Thy statutes, and may the law of Thy mouth be more precious to us than thousands of gold and silver.

Lord! we pray, that as in the year now about to close Thine eye has been watching over us, so Thou wilt take care of us also in the one to come. May it be a year in which many shall be gathered into Thy Church on earth; may the heathen speedily be converted and Christians become more devoted to Thee.

Pour out Thy Spirit upon all nations; where there now is war do Thou restore peace, and order, and right. Be with our country, and bless it with pious rulers; keep far from them all un-

lawful and selfish desires, and make them faithful organs of right and justice.

Bless all the Churches and all the Schools of learning; bless the arts and sciences, in as far as they promote Thy glory; and let all the joys of social intercourse serve as means to make us more grateful and more devout.

Dwell, O Lord! in this Institution; may every one here seek Thee, and may this School become a nursery of true piety. We all stand in need of Thee, O Lord! Be near to the inexperienced among us and make them serious; teach those who are in health to be grateful; those who are afflicted, to seek for consolation in the Saviour; those who are tempted, to be strong; and those who are sick, to be cheerful. Pass not by those whom Thy hand has smitten, but be their comfort, their joy, and consolation.

Man stands constantly on the narrow spot which lies between the past and the future. The future is not yet, the past has been, but is no more; and the narrow spot on which man stands, the *present*, is fugitive; while we speak of it, while we think it to be, it is added to the past and gone, never to return. This process repeats itself daily and hourly; and every moment we may say: an old year ends and a new one commences, for the stream of time flows on uninterruptedly, and time itself is nothing but the succession of the present to the past and of the future to the present.

But there are moments when these constant changes become more perceptible ; not to speak of such as may be found in the life of each individual, we will turn our attention at present to that day, which throughout the wide extent of Christendom connects, and at the same time separates, one civil year from another. We are never more strongly invited to reflect seriously on life and its end, than when we become conscious of the fact that another year has fled. The period of human life is made up of years ; by years we calculate its duration ; certain decisive years mark the great transitions of life from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, and from manhood to old age. When we remember, how few the years are which we are permitted to spend on this earth, that but a few of us live to see seventy or eighty, we cannot, on the one hand, help looking back upon a year as it dies away behind us, with all its joys and sorrows, with all its evil and good deeds, and on the other hand cannot avoid looking forward with interest upon the dark bosom of the new year, concealing within itself bliss or misery for each of us. But looking backward and forward, looking upon years that are gone by and upon years that are to come, we cast a glance at our whole life, and are led to ask ourselves, what is its end ? what are we ? and what do we aim at ?

The answer to these questions is contained in our text. *We are strangers and sojourners upon*

earth ; we have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Life is often compared to a journey and men to pilgrims. The points of resemblance are many, but I intend alluding only to a few of the most striking.

I. A pilgrim is one who *travels from place to place* ; having a certain point at the end of his journey in view, he does not stop until he reaches it. As he travels along, he is everywhere *a stranger*, and though he forms attachments and makes acquaintances, he must soon part with them, and leaving them behind make new ones. So also the scenery around him changes continually : now he enters countries that are pleasing and lovely, and now such as are sterile and barren ; now the sun, favorable to his journey, shines upon him, now storms rage around him, and the waters rise and threaten to render his way impassable. In all these respects, human life is like a pilgrimage, and we are like pilgrims.

Like the traveller, we are surrounded by ever new and changing scenes. Of all the relations of life, there is none more important, more dear and valuable, than that under which we enter this world. It is the first of all which becomes known to us ; and is the centre from which we enter all other relations. In it the sense of right and the love of truth are cultivated. What the particular

and appropriate soil is for the roots of the plant, the family is for man. However the activity of a man may grow in extent, he will always look back with intense delight upon father and mother, and brother and sister. But we cannot remain forever in the family which gave us birth. We must part with it, and sunder the most tender and most sacred relations; we must give up the pleasures of daily intercourse; we must leave our earliest home, whose hearthstone has become too narrow to accommodate all, and enter the wide and uncertain world, there to work and toil and follow our calling.

But the scenes of the world also change. One generation comes, and another passes away; while the one blooms, the other fades. The human race is like a tree, that bears blossoms and fruits in every stage of perfection during the same season. Some are born and grow up before our eyes in all the vigor of health, others retire and are seen no more. As the leaves fall in autumn, and new ones appear in the spring, so men come and go. And, as they come and go, their wants, their views, their desires, their undertakings change. Every one, in accordance with the measure of strength granted him, strives, by his will and works, to leave a trace of his existence behind him; but a few years are sufficient to destroy the endeavors of a whole lifetime. Nor is one day like another; but as on a tree not two leaves may be found which are exactly alike, so one day differs from another day. The

one offers us a peaceful, cerulean sky, the other is cloudy and dark; the one brings us soft and mild breezes, the other storms and chilling winds; the one is a day of joy, the other a day of grief; the one is marked by evil deeds, the other by good deeds.

Thus surrounded by constant changes, we are like strangers, who, though they make friends, cannot retain them long. Whoever has reached middle life will readily acknowledge this. Ask the man of forty, where the friends of his youth, his parents, his teachers are. They were near and dear to him; to them he was closely united; their counsel he desired; to their bosoms he confided his griefs and his joys. Ask him where they are, and he will answer you, that they are gone; that they no longer enjoy the light of the sun, and no longer walk among the living. Many a spring the grass has already grown on their graves, and many a winter has made it wither. And if you turn to one still older and ask him, whether he feels as though he were walking among friends and acquaintances, he will tell you that he feels solitary; that those who now surround him, understand him no longer, and that he cannot enter into their views and pleasures. Where are those, Goethe asked, in his old age, who listened to the songs of my youth? who understood me when I spoke, and were delighted when I sung? They are gone, and I am left, ununderstood, a stranger to the multitude, forsaken and alone. I sing my songs to those

who do no longer desire them, and even their applause makes me sad.

Yet, why should I turn your eyes upon persons and things at a distance? That we are pilgrims on earth and strangers, that all around us constantly changes, may be proved by a single glance at our own little circle. Consider how much has changed even within these walls during a single year. Some of those who were with us at the beginning of this year, have parted with us; and others, young as yourselves, and full of bright hopes, have left this world to go before us to the land, whither all of us, sooner or later, must follow. Their memory is still fresh in our minds, and many a tear has been shed as a due tribute; but how soon their names will be forgotten, and we shall speak of them as the sojourner speaks of cities and countries through which he once passed. Brought together here by the same purpose, and full of youthful warmth, you form attachments and expect to walk together on the journey of life,—but who could tell us, which of you will next follow to that bourne from which no traveller returns, or whose lot it shall be to travel on till all his companions have dropped from his side?

Our own little circle is the picture of the large one which we call the world. As there, some are born and others die, so here, the older members go, and new ones come; the scenery within these walls changes without intermission.

II. But these changes do not merely affect things around us ; *we ourselves are constantly subject to them.* As the pilgrim daily changes his views concerning countries, customs and manners, and increases his knowledge, so also our views, opinions and judgments are undergoing constant changes ; many of us can already look back with astonishment upon our former notions. Daily we acquire more knowledge ; daily we are endeavoring to gain what may be useful : thus our faculties are exercised and strengthened. Our character is also affected by time, the source of all changes ; if it be not for the better, it must be for the worse. But in no part of our nature do we experience these changes more sensibly than in our bodies. We are like a tree that, while young and vigorous, sends forth new leaves and new twigs every spring, in the place of old ones ; but with each renewal of its branches, it loses a part of its vigor, until at length it becomes weak, and sapless, and old ; losing branch after branch, it finally withers and dies. No one can say at the end of a year, that he has not paid the debt he owes to time.

This is so true, that every change which we experience, though connected with some gain, is nevertheless inseparable from some loss. The boy looks forward with longing to the years of youth ; he would like to be full-grown and his own master. He approaches the long-desired period of life ; he *gains* what he anticipated, but *loses* forever the

innocent joyousness of his childhood, when but a few thoughts could agitate his breast, and the few wishes of his heart were easily satisfied. The child has grown up and become a youth; and if before, his senses opened but a small part of this world to his desires, now a glowing imagination and a bold judgment unfolds an infinitude before the eye of the young man.

Now presentiments of future victories and achievements, of future changes and reforms to be produced by a rising generation, float in an excited imagination, and the youth longs with impatience for the years of manhood. He enters it; but the ideals of his imagination suddenly assume the shape of dry reality;—to effect anything he has to concentrate his strength upon a single purpose, upon the particular sphere in which he is called to labor, and of all the dreams of his youth not one can be realized, for nothing but *labor* and *care* await him. Something has been gained, but much too has been lost. Now he toils and labors to silence the cares of the world, but before he is aware of it, he has arrived at the threshold of old age—of the days of which he must say: I have no pleasure in them. Maturity of judgment and ripeness of experience he may have gained, but vigor of mind and the desire to apply them to life are gone. He looks back upon the course of his life—upon the temptations and stormy passions of youth—upon the errors of his manhood, and appears to himself like the sailor, who

commenced his voyage with many ships having all their sails set, but is glad if he is permitted to reach the haven of security in a single boat.

III. This remark may serve to form the transition to a consideration *on the end of our journey*. A faithful and conscientious pilgrim will not suffer himself to be detained, either by the beauty of the country through which he passes or by the hospitality with which he is entertained, but he will continue on his way till he shall enter the place of his destination, in which alone he can feel happy and contented.

And so it is with us on the journey of life. As the changes around us and in us make us feel that we are strangers on earth, so they excite in us a desire for that which is permanent, and this desire again will render us dissatisfied with all that is below the sun. And what is there on earth, that could satisfy the soul entirely? To be a man, to have powers which are limited and easily exhausted, to meet with impediments on every side when we wish to apply those powers, and yet not to feel that the soul is chained and cramped, would be a contradiction. All our strength is connected with weakness, every truth with error, every virtue with vice, every joy with grief, every hope with fear. Genius and talents and natural gifts may produce blossoms, but they bear no fruit; the learning and wisdom of this world may seek much, but will find little; pleasures and sensual luxuries may entertain us for

a while, but they cannot give us permanent enjoyment; riches, rank, and honor may promise a great deal to our vain imaginations, but they will deceive and disappoint us.

You are yet young, and it may be difficult for me to persuade you that all which man desires, short of eternity, is vain and transitory. Let me give you, therefore, the experience of those who, full of wisdom and laden with the honors of this world, have expressed themselves concerning the happiness of this life in terms most discouraging to the worldling. It is well known that the Greeks, whose prospects of an immortality of the soul were dark and uncertain, could not see anything in this world worthy of their pains and troubles. Their poets sung: the worst of all that ever happens a man is to be born; but after he is once born, the best thing that can befall him is to die and return whence he came. These notes of sorrow run through their most cheerful poetry, and we frequently meet with them where we should least expect them.

Yet even men of modern times have uttered similar words. Franklin, the distinguished philosopher, expresses himself thus: "If I were permitted to live my life over again, I should decline the task, unless I should be permitted to publish a revised and corrected edition." Kant, whose heroic mind, like that of Tantalus of old, had attempted to seize heaven, exclaimed in his old age: "No prudent man would ever desire to live his life the second time."

But most remarkable of all is a confession of Goethe. He, as it is known to all who are acquainted with his life, was considered the child of fortune, the favorite of his nation, the king of modern poets. Nature had lavished all her favors upon him. He was distinguished for his beauty, for his strong constitution, and for the always happy and cheerful disposition of his mind. His wealth enabled him to spend more than \$60,000 on his private library and picture gallery ; his learning in all the branches of human knowledge was unparalleled ; the honor bestowed upon him by emperors and kings and all the living artists and literary men was unbounded. And yet a few years before his death, we hear him make the following highly remarkable confession :

“ They have called me a child of fortune, neither will I complain, nor find fault with the events of my life. But, on the whole, it has been nothing but labor and trouble, and I can safely say, that in my seventy-five years, there have not been *four weeks* of unmingled pleasure.”

How instructive to all of us is this confession, that seventy-five years of the life of the most prosperous man did not produce as much as four weeks of pure pleasure !

When we consider that everything around us is transitory and vain, that we are ourselves subject to constant changes, and that we can never find on earth what we seek, we cannot but feel that we are strangers and sojourners. But every

traveller expects a resting-place, and we expect ours also. Though strangers on earth, we have a home beyond the skies; towards that home we are travelling, and in it we expect to find peace and rest. The grave, it is true, yawns at the end of our journey, and all that lives must sink into it, must die and moulder; but the grave is only the narrow gate which leads to heaven, and heaven is the true home of our souls. Without it, our existence would be incomplete; our most noble desires would remain unsatisfied, and the faculties of our souls undeveloped. The deeper our conviction is, that we are strangers on earth and have no continuing city here, the more unreservedly will we place all our hopes in a world to come. And in this, religion confirms us; for while nature teaches us not to put our confidence in anything mortal, religion informs us that the word of God will abide forever, and that the day is awaiting all men, when they will be called to enter into eternity and time will be no more—when their lot once appointed to them will be without the least change—when their joys or sufferings will be the same forever. But though eternity awaits all men, all will not enter into the city of God; for it is a mighty city—a holy city—and none will be admitted except those who are holy. The day will come, when all the dead, great and small, shall appear before the Lord; when the books will be opened, and among them the Book of Life, and the dead shall

be judged according to their works. But death and its dominion, darkness, will be cast into the lake of fire, and with it every one whose name is not recorded in the Book of Life. Only after all evil shall have disappeared, after the wicked and unholy shall have been separated from the faithful, then the Lord will wipe away all tears from the eyes of his people, and there shall be no more death among them; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. But they shall be before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

The end of our journey is glorious; we shall obtain not a corruptible, but an incorruptible crown. Heaven invites us to come and partake of its glories; yet there is but one way which leads to it. We are pilgrims, travelling to eternity; we have no abiding-place on earth; we seek one to come; is it not imprudent and unwise to continue on the way, though we cannot but know that it will lead us to destruction? Or would we not be stupid and thoughtless should we never ask ourselves, what is the aim and end of our journey? and which is the way that leads thither?

This way, the way to our eternal home, I will name to you, to-day. When travellers, pursuing their journey, arrive at certain resting-places, they ascertain whether or not they are on the right way ; and when travellers to eternity pass from one year into another, can they avoid reviewing their past course of life, in order to ascertain whether or not they have been on the way that leads to Heaven? This inquiry is the more important, since there is an absolute certainty that but *one* way leads to our home—the end of our pilgrimage—and that every other way leads to eternal ruin.

Which, then, is the way, on which alone we may travel safely towards eternity? It is prepared for us already ; we need not seek long for it. Christ, our Saviour, has said : *I am the way*. But how shall we enter this way? I answer, by *repentance* and *faith*. But we cannot repent, nor believe, as long as we adhere to sin, as long as sin reigns in our inclinations, as long as we love this world as though it were our true home. Let us, therefore, be sober, and circumspect, and decided ; let us embrace the Saviour, and, by the assistance of His Spirit, eradicate sin from our hearts ; let us dismiss all trifles, and whatever has no bearing upon our sanctification ; let us avoid whatever may entice our senses—whatever may mislead our hearts—whatever may keep our thoughts in the dust ; and whatever may bribe our judgment, entangle our will, and darken our views of Heaven.

But, above all, do not lose a single moment in entering on this way, for though it is prepared already, it is nevertheless long. Easy as it may be to form resolutions, or to determine henceforth to avoid pernicious habits, or to flee bad company, or to war against some evil desire, or to exercise ourselves in resigning all selfishness; it will nevertheless require time to execute such resolutions. It is not the work of a moment to establish ourselves in our convictions, to become steadfast in our better views, to purify our corrupt inclinations, and to remain faithful to our resolutions. The way which leads to Heaven is long; for long is the way of our sanctification, long the way which leads to a complete victory over sin, long the way of establishing a perfect harmony in ourselves between the law of our members and conscience, long the way of knowing Christ, His love and mercy, fully.

When we compare the duration of life with the length of this way, life will appear too short. It is true, that when we commence a year, and look forward to its many weeks and days and hours, it seems to be long, especially if it interpose between a desire and the possession of its object. But looking back upon the past year, the length of three hundred and sixty-five days dwindles away and appears to be extremely short. The poet seems to us to see the truth when he says, the hour is long, but the day is short. Life is of short duration, but the work to be done in it of eternal moment. Em-

brace, therefore, the Saviour without delay, and use every moment of the time which the Lord in His infinite mercy grants you. Be warned, too, by the lot of those who have gone before us to their eternal home. The year which is now about to close, they commenced with us, and were cheerful and well as we are ourselves; but they did not live to see its end. Be warned by your own frailty; for some of you have been near the grave, but the Lord in His mercy restored you again to life. And why does the Lord, on whose will all life depends, permit us to pass from the old to the new year? Certainly not that we may spend our time in seeking the pleasures of this world, and in gratifying our sensual appetites; but that we may prepare ourselves to meet our Judge. Come, therefore, at once to the conclusion, that it will be well for you to use your time, and all that time may bring, every word of instruction, every hint, every impulse, to consider your ways and turn unto the testimonies of the Lord. Whether the coming year will bring you joy or grief, happiness or misery, depends upon the Lord; but whether or not you will use whatever it may bring you for your eternal salvation, depends on yourselves.

IV. But, in conclusion, careful travellers *will look for waymarks* on their journey, in order to see whether they are moving in the right direction. Pilgrims for eternity should also look for waymarks.

There are many, but I will point out only three to-day.

The *first* of these waymarks, is a *judgment* that applies the Spirit of Christ as the only true measure to all on earth and to ourselves. Man judges, whenever he thinks; and because he alone can judge, he was said, by an ancient philosopher, to be the measure of all things on earth. When we judge, we conclude the individual under its generality, and measure the former by the latter. Judging, therefore, we place upon everything its proper value, and we ascertain this value by measuring the smaller by the greater. But as long as man considers himself the true measure of all things, as long as he determines the value of all around him by its tendency to advance his sensual or intellectual benefit, his judgment must be erroneous. The only true measure, by which the proper place and value of everything may be determined, is *Christ*; in proportion as anything leads to Him, does its value increase; and in proportion as it is remote from Him, must its value decrease. If we learn much, but know nothing of Christ; if we do much, but do nothing in reference to the kingdom of Christ; if we enjoy many things, but derive none of our pleasures from communion with Christ; if we suffer much, but not for the sake of Christ,—all will be vain; for Christ must be the measure, according to which we estimate the value of all we do, enjoy, and suffer.

Ask yourselves now, what guides you in your

estimate of the state of the things around us? Do you judge of them according to the views of the world, or do you view them in the Spirit of the Saviour. Answer this question faithfully, and you will know whether you are on the right way to the city of God.

The *second* waymark is a *will*, all of whose resolutions and actions proceed from the Spirit of God, and have a tendency to advance the kingdom of heaven. When in all our resolutions we keep our heavenly calling in view, and constantly strive after holiness; when we determine daily to grow in faith, and resolutely to root out all sin from our hearts; when we never lose sight of our communion with God, and always act as it becomes beings who are called to enter a holy city, in which there is no temple made with hands, but in which God Himself is the temple: then we may believe ourselves to be on the right way to Heaven.

The *third* waymark, finally, is a *heart*, all of whose desires and wishes are pure, and proceed from the Spirit of Christ that lives and dwells in them. Man has wishes as long as he lives; but when his wishes are not directed upon his heavenly home, when they all cluster around the pleasures of this world, or rest on objects of avarice or ambition or voluptuousness, it is certain that he is in the wrong way. Whatever wishes we may have, either for ourselves, or for our friends, or for our country, or for the whole human race, if the Spirit of Christ

does not live and breathe in these wishes, they will be earthly, vain, and remain unblessed.

To know now whether you are in the right way, answer faithfully these three questions :

1. What is the measure by which I estimate the things of the world, and my own moral character ?

2. What is the tendency of all my resolutions and actions ? are they limited to this world, or do they aim at something higher ?

3. What is the soul of my desires and wishes ? Is it earth or heaven ? the world or Christ ?

May the Lord grant that the year we are about to commence, may not pass by without renewing the hearts of the careless among us.

THE FINAL CONFLICT OF THE INNER LIFE.*

PSALM 103 : 15, 16.

“As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.”

THE life of man has been divided by some into ten, by others into seven periods; but it no doubt exhibits *four*, which are no less distinct and well marked than the four regions of the world, or the four seasons of the year. It seems to be a general law, that whatever lives must pass through these four stages of existence, one of which is that of bloom and vigor. The plant has its childhood:

* Occasioned by the death of Daniel Miller, a member of the second graduating class, of Marshall College, 1838, and for one year a student of the Theological Seminary, at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, who repaired to Princeton to prosecute his theological studies; but taken ill in the course of a few weeks, was removed to the house of his parents residing near Shepherdstown, Virginia, where he died on the 30th of November, 1839, aged twenty-six years,—a young man of very amiable disposition, marked consistency of Christian character, and earnest devotion to the Church of Christ; the unexpected announcement of whose death cast a deep gloom over the professors and students, with whom he had for five years been so intimately connected.—ED.

the first leaves which grow near the soil and the roots, are imperfectly formed; they are large and full of a rude and unrefined juice; but, as these leaves grow higher and are further removed from the soil, as they are more exposed to the air and light, the juice becomes more refined, the color more fresh and tender, the forms more perfect, until finally, on the top of the plant many delicate leaves cluster around one centre and form the bud, from which the flower bursts upon us in all its beauty. This point of existence is the youth of the plant; but it must be observed that the flower itself reaches a degree of perfection, beyond which it is impossible for it to go, and at which its fragrance and the delicacy of its colors become less and less, until they finally disappear: then the plant spends all the power which is left in ripening the fruit, whose weight soon bends the tender twig to the earth, and makes it crumble into dust.

So it is with the different stages of human life. In childhood, our sensations and perceptions are indistinct and uncultivated; we spend no less than three years, unconscious of ourselves, in learning to walk and speak. As we grow, our perceptions become more acute; we learn to distinguish accurately, and fancy, imagination and memory begin to perform their offices, when spring dwells on our cheeks, and the eye sparkles with fire. But there is no pause in that which lives and grows; while we yet dream of the future and of the plans which

we desire to execute, the age of maturity steals imperceptibly upon us, and though for a short time a ripe judgment, cool reflection and calm deliberation prevail, our heads will soon hang down and indicate our decay.

Of all the periods of life, that of youth is considered most enviable. All the mental and physical powers are in their bloom; the muscles swell softly into each other; the nerves are strong and vigorous; the imagination dives into the future, and, free from cares, sees itself mingling with those who devote their talents and energies to the public welfare. And yet this season passes by most quickly of all, and frequently unnoticed by ourselves. Every step we take towards it, increases our vigor; but every step beyond it, leads to infirmity.

When we consider, therefore, that the period of youth is short, that it passes by like a dream, that when once gone it cannot be recalled, must we not feel sad, that the most beautiful in life shows itself only to disappear so quickly—exhibits its charms only to attract us, and leave us to bewail its brevity? Yet this is not all. Dangers beset our youth on every side, as thorns the cup of a beautiful flower. The fulness of physical power is favorable to many diseases; a vigorous imagination easily bribes the judgment, yields to passion, and leads to perverted views, which must in the course of time destroy the source of cheerfulness. Many fall victims to a

nature, exhausted in following the allurements of vice ; before we can warn and admonish them, they have gone where our voice is no longer heard. Those of us who have passed the meridian of life, when looking back and seeking those who were born with us, must feel like the man who, late in the fall, looks around and sees but here and there a flower which reminds him of the spring of the year. Joy and grief, mourning and cheerfulness, must mingle in our bosoms. Besides, many who, in their youth, promised fairly, and were the hope of parents, the pride of teachers, the ornaments of society, are laid low in death, when they seemed strongest. Very few of all who are born, it may be said with truth, reach the springtime of life ; fewer still are permitted to pass beyond it. Such thoughts are certainly sad and mournful, and deserve to engage our attention.

I. Let us first briefly consider *the power of death over youth.*

This power, in the first place, *is irresistible.* We can exercise some power of will with regard to whatever else on earth may meet us ; we may devise plans by which to avoid an evil, or to ameliorate our condition ; or we may form resolutions to change or improve our whole manner of life. But death is wholly independent of our will. No power on earth can retard its progress, or restore the disordered system, when once it is appointed to death. It is true, that an eternity rests in the

bosom of man—that his mental powers require a whole life and more for their complete development ; and yet there is nothing more frail, nothing more like a dream, than the existence of the noblest being in nature. He has the power to will whatever he chooses, and he has the power to execute his will, if it be rational and accommodate itself to circumstances ; he has the power to dispose of everything which is his, and of all nature around him ; but as regards himself, his entrance into the world and his exit from it, he is not consulted, and his will is powerless. He is called into life by a power that did not think it necessary to obtain the consent of his will ; he must appear at its summons ; he must appear in a certain family and in a certain place ; neither the time, nor the age, nor the nation in which he is born, is made dependent on his choice. Thus, man must also leave this world, whether he is ready to do so or not. His hour of departure is appointed before the hour of his birth, but he knows it not ; the circumstances under which an individual will have to leave this world—whether in affluence or poverty, whether richly laden with honors or stripped of all favor,—all are determined upon, but he is ignorant of them. The disease which is to undermine his health may already have seized his vitals and it may go on in its slow but certain way, while he thinks himself well and strong ; or his death may be caused by an accident which, though it could not have been

foreseen, is nevertheless made the instrument to execute the will of God.

Who that considers all this would be willing to say, that he is master of his own life? or that he who, left to the resources of reason, neither knows whence he came nor whither he goes, can resist the power of death when it takes hold of him? It is but too certain that we must follow death when it beckons; that we do not know the hour nor the day of its approach; that neither youth nor strength, neither the tears of parents nor of friends, neither the petitions of pious acquaintances nor our own wishes and most ardent longing for a continuance of life, can rescue us from its power. We may have laid plans for future usefulness; we may have commenced a work which demands our continued care and protection; but nothing can augment the diminished pulsation of the heart, or prevent the growing coldness of the limbs, the irregularity of breathing, and the final struggle of death.

The power of death over youth, in the second place, is *great and extensive*. According to the best calculations, it is fully ascertained, that of those who are born at any given time, more than the one-fourth part die within less than three years, and that more than one-half of the remainder sink into the grave before they have attained to their twentieth year. Those of us, then, who have arrived at the age of twenty, have reached an age which most of the children of men do not attain

to. And this great power of death over youth is not owing to want of care or to inexperience, for all the improvements and precautions of medical art have not essentially diminished the mortality of youth.

The human race, considered as a whole, may in this respect be compared to a tree full of buds and blossoms. Many of its buds do not reach the stage of bloom; and of those which are permitted to unfold themselves, by far the greater part are shaken off by storms and winds, and their leaves, without having had time to leave the beginning of fruit upon the twigs, cover the ground all around, like flakes of snow. And of the blossoms which pass over into young fruit, how little matures—how few blossoms produce perfect fruit? For, though the tree be laden with young fruit, who of us does not know, that internal diseases, and external storms, unfavorable seasons, venomous insects, and want of power in the tree to bear and nourish so much, will cause more than one-half to fall off? So it is with our race. Children that have scarcely begun to live in this world, are already recalled. With some, the hour of birth is the hour of death. Others remain for a short time, but depart again before even the bloom of their lives has begun. Others give promise of long life, and begin to lay plans for the future; but they are consigned to the grave before any one could have expected it. This we experience

every day ; yet, while we admit the possibility of an early death with regard to every one else, we feel reluctant to admit it with regard to ourselves. We are all inclined to anticipate long life, yet who of us, when looking upon the beautiful blossoms which cover the branches and twigs of a tree, can say, which of them will fall off, and which will be permitted to produce fruit? The chances of youth to reach an advanced age are much less than we are, in general, inclined to think. For, when of every two, *one* must die before the twentieth year, it is very possible, indeed, that he who least thinks of it may be that one. If it be certain, that an age higher than twenty years classes us with those who enjoy an extraordinary lot, can we, for a moment, deny the great sway of death over youth? and can we remain indifferent to its power? Can we live as if we could prepare ourselves for eternity at any time? Can we be thoughtless and careless? Can we suffer all the warnings that reach us, to pass by without having the least effect upon us?

The power of death, in the third place, *is altogether mysterious*. For death does not only seize the young, but very frequently those among them, whom we look upon as the future pillars of society ; whose disposition and character, whose diligence and faithfulness, whose talents and acquirements encourage the very highest expecta-

tions concerning them. Their education is the object of paternal care and solicitude; their minds begin to exhibit vigor and energy; their hearts have already embraced the noble and the good, nay, they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord, and piety adorns them, and is, in their sight, the greatest ornament of man's life. Living as strangers on earth, they have directed their eyes to Heaven, and desire only to live for the purpose of doing good, of benefiting their fellow-men, of leading many to the Saviour. But when they approach the close of preparation for public life; when, on the threshold of practical usefulness and Christian activity, death seizes them, and they walk no longer among men; when we follow their remains to the grave, can we discover any reason why the Lord has taken them, and left others, who will spend their lives in idleness and perhaps abuse Divine goodness? When a work, laying hold of eternity, seems to suffer by the early removal of a man who was particularly fitted for its execution, must we not say that the power of death is mysterious?

Nor can we help acknowledging that youth is but the period of bloom; that their views and sentiments are only forming, and nothing is, as yet, perfectly ripe. Now, if it is the destination and final end of man to glorify God, this end will certainly be better effected, when all that is in man

has developed itself, than when some of his powers are still in a state of involution.

The mystery which hangs around the death of youth will strike us more forcibly, when we turn our attention to children. They frequently become the prey of death, before they have learned to name their parents, to love them, or to acknowledge their kindness towards them. The earth is designed to furnish an opportunity for cultivating our reason, for developing and disciplining all the faculties of mind; but, before they are conscious of themselves, they are already in the embraces of death. The earth is the planet on which we are to become acquainted with the Saviour, and, through Him, obtain access to the throne of God, and enjoy eternal salvation; but children are frequently taken from us, before they can even stammer the name of Christ. Certainly, a power which seizes so many undeveloped germs, so many unopened buds, so many immature fruits, is a mysterious power.

And this mystery cannot be diminished in the least by any arguments reason, left to itself, may furnish. It may see a divine plan, a divine design which is to be executed by man; but when frequently the best means, the purest characters, the most devoted and zealous servants of the Lord are taken away, reason cannot discover the cause, nor see what benefit the work of God on earth may derive from the removal of such men. Nor do the

Scriptures say anything which is well calculated to disperse this darkness. We know from them that God is the Father over all—that all men are destined for eternity and for eternal life; but they do not say a word concerning the cause and object of this great mortality among youth, nor do they intimate that opportunities will be afforded them in another world for the cultivation of those powers which on earth attracted our admiration, though we were only permitted to see them in the bud.

II. Though it cannot be denied, that darkness surrounds the graves of youth, *we may nevertheless find light if we examine the Scriptures faithfully.* And with regard to children, I would, in the first place, repeat the words of the Saviour: “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” The soul of a child is the complete soul of a man as regards its capacity and powers; all it needs is development. It has the full germ of an imperishable existence; it is of divine origin; and its birth into life on earth is the first stage of the process by which it is to arrive at maturity. If the soul of a child is not permitted to unfold itself here, can we believe that it will find no opportunity to unfold itself anywhere else? God does not suffer anything which His hand has created to perish, and will He consign to oblivion that spark of eternal life which He has laid in the breast of a babe? Children of

the most promising talents, of the most amiable and obedient disposition, are generally most subject to the power of death: is this so, because the heavenly fire burning in their souls consumes the earthly covering, or because they have ripened sooner than others for their eternal home? or because the Lord takes them, in order to transplant them to a place where the process of development may be accelerated? On earth all cultivation is bound to the laws of time; it is slow and frequently interrupted by external circumstances, and even exposed to dangers. Perhaps the Lord takes these children, lest the heat of the day or the storms of life should strip them of their loveliness—of the beauty of their souls, or lest malice should pervert their understanding, or false doctrines deceive their souls. At all events, we may feel assured, that the soul which has animated a body, though only for a short time—the soul which is once set in motion, will find one mansion among the many in our Father's house which is suited to itself, and that the Saviour, who represented children as models for us, whose readiness to *believe* and to *hope* He has taught us to imitate, will certainly take care of them.

As regards the death of youth, I would refer to the case of Enoch. He walked with God while on earth, and God favored him. He scarcely reached the third part of his father's life; because God loved him, He took him early, and he was no

longer seen among men. The just, though they die early, are at rest. And let us remark here, that it is not the number of years, not the length of time we spend on earth, which is valuable or desirable, but the manner in which, and the purpose for which, we live. A man who has lived ninety years and has not become acquainted with the Saviour, has not derived any more benefit from his age than one who dies without a Saviour in his twentieth year, whilst the youth who receives and loves his Saviour, has gained more than both together.

This, then, is the first ray of light, piercing through the thick darkness which surrounds the graves of children and of youth. The Lord scatters abroad the seeds of life richly, and causes them to germinate and grow to a certain height, but then, like the gardener who sows thickly the seeds of the plants which he intends setting out in different places, he transplants the tender shoots, in order to give them a fairer climate and a more favorable soil.

The death of youth, however, may not only benefit them; it is intended for our welfare also. It is intended to *warn* and to *admonish* us. When we see the most beautiful flowers wither as soon as they open their cups, or when we see buds, nipped by the frost, hanging down and withering before they have burst open, can we avoid thinking of the vanity of all things on earth? That we have no

permanent home here, we may know even without the Bible; history and our own experience teach it. Whatever the ancient world possessed, whatever was beautiful in it, whatever was great and attractive and noble in it, has passed away; the old cedar, that witnessed the lapse of centuries, decays; the finest productions of nature wither, and the sweetest fruits return to the dust. Nothing remains the same. Society changes; the whole race is in a state of constant commotion. There are some arriving and others going; we ourselves see the most cheerful days of strength and vigor pass away like a shadow; and when we think of using our time with wisdom and prudence, we have already approached old age, and feel exhausted and powerless. But if we are taught by everything around us that nothing on earth is permanent, that all is either in a state of constant progress or decay, that nothing remains the same even for a moment, and that we ourselves are changing every day and every hour, can we help thinking of our latter end? Sooner or later death will seize each one of us, whether prepared for eternity or not. Sooner or later we shall have to part with this life and with all we loved, with all our wishes, with all our pleasures, and with all our possessions; and nothing will be left to us except the love of a Saviour and the hope of immortality. Christ alone will then cheer our hearts, and shine into the darkness of death as the stars of heaven shine into the dark-

ness of night. He alone can then sustain and comfort us, when we must yield our life to the unwelcome messenger. He teaches us that this world stands in connection with another, that the soul is divine and immortal, that whatever virtue is cultivated on earth will bloom in Heaven and bear eternal fruits, and that there the changes to which the soul is subject while on earth, will affect it no more.

One thing is certain: all of us must die. But when each one will be called away, is known to none. The death of our young friends admonishes us, however, to be ready at all times. Let us not be thoughtless, but serious and earnest. Death may approach us soon; what, then, will a long or a short life profit us, if we have not endeavored to secure for ourselves the happiness of Heaven? Our spirit longs for it; we cannot endure the thought of disappointment. Every joy we feel, causes the heart to desire another joy that is purer and greater; any degree of happiness awakens the hope in our bosom of perfect happiness; and all the pleasures of earth cause us to long for uninterrupted beatitude in Heaven. Can we be so unwise as to neglect our highest interests, both for time and eternity? so unwise as to see death rage on all sides, and yet not ask ourselves, whether, if called before the bar of judgment, we would be admitted to glory and honor, or be consigned to shame and woe?

In the next place, we are admonished not to overvalue the assistance of man in the execution of God's plans. Though the best and most noble men are frequently taken away from us, the plans of the Lord still continue to succeed, and are not interrupted in the least. The knowledge, experience and inventions of mankind, may seem to receive a check, by the death of one who possessed the talents which were able to fructify a whole age, and to exert a beneficial influence upon thousands; but when we come to examine the question more closely, we find that whatever is good and noble advances nevertheless. We are thus taught, on the one hand, that the Lord will always qualify such men as He needs for His work; and on the other, that He calculates but little on our wisdom, and even frequently thwarts our best and wisest plans. Our wisdom is not pure; the best motives of our hearts are stained with sin; how, then, can we undertake to say, who of us will be the best means in the hands of God to carry out His purposes? What else do we deserve but confusion and shame, when we see our presumption disappointed? It is to humble us, that the Lord takes that from us which we believe to possess as our own. It is to disturb our ease and rest, that the Lord calls home those in whom we place our dependence and confidence. Whatever we have, whatever seems to have been placed in our hands, is still in the hands of the Lord, who can take it again as He has given it.

The death of youth may therefore teach us *wisdom*, *humility*, and a *readiness* to submit our will to God's will, even when it causes our hearts to bleed, when it tears asunder the most tender connections.

And, considering this, ought we not to feel humble in view of our own importance? We are prone to overvalue our services, or to think that the world could not go on without us; that good and noble undertakings would have to fail, were it not for ourselves; that we alone are able to perform certain duties in the right way, to make necessary improvements, and to forward the endeavors of our fellow-men. And yet it is the Lord that points out the work, and calls His servants. He chooses whom He pleases; and whom He chooses, him He also fits for the performance of the work intrusted to him. We are His, all of us, from the highest to the lowest; the field in which we labor is His; He sends us into it; He calls us back from it; as one comes another goes; but the work will be carried on, whether by the one or by the other. Let us therefore learn, on the one hand, to feel humble and meek, and, on the other, to trust in the Lord; for He will always qualify some to carry out His glorious designs; His work will never be neglected, though the best men should sometimes be taken away in the midst of their labors.

Another consideration deserves attention. We who are left should not forget to be grateful to God for His signal mercy towards us. Surrounded by

death as we are, seeing how few of us are destined to escape the many dangers which beset our lives, and realizing that we are weak and frail beings,—we cannot but acknowledge that God has been merciful towards us in that He has kindly permitted us to reach those years in which we are able to know ourselves, to know Him, and to appreciate the value of life. In proportion as we enjoy our existence, in proportion as we love to see the light of the sun, to use our bodily strength, to cultivate pleasant acquaintances, to attend to our daily pursuits, to observe the occurrences of the day, and above all to taste the sweetness of intercourse with friends, and parents, and brothers, and children, in that proportion ought our hearts to overflow with gratitude towards God. Some of us have seen our lives preserved in times when the friends of our youth were taken from our side. We have now reached an age that is laden with experience: will we not adore the grace of Him who has thus supported us? Others among us are young, but no one is so young that he has not yet accompanied some one of his friends to the grave: will you not consider that the Lord has been kind and loving in not calling you away? And suppose you had been laid low in the dust, as were your friends, would you have been prepared to enter the narrow habitation of the grave with composure and in peace, where the voice of man is heard no longer to console, where the sun cannot send the ani-

mating warmth of its genial light, where all is mute and silent, and you would be alone amid the darkness of subterraneous night? It is an awful thought to have to part with this world, to submit to being separated from all the ties of love, and friendship, and interest, and to be covered with the dust of the earth, without knowing where we are going—whether a kind Saviour will receive our spirits in the hour of death, or we will at once be summoned to enter the abode of eternal woe. The Lord has been kind to us, for He has permitted us to live until now, and to seek Him and prepare ourselves for that last of all the events of our earthly existence. My young friends, be not careless; do not delay your preparation for death, lest it come upon you at such an hour as you think not, and it be too late. And if it be too late, it will be so forever. As little as you will be able to recall life and commence it anew in the struggle of death, so little will contrition or regret be of any avail then. Let us then be grateful to the Lord, and use His mercy in a worthy manner.

III. In conclusion, it remains to mention the friend whose loss we lament to-day.

He connected himself with us nearly five years ago. He had commenced his education in Shepherdstown, Va., and chosen our Institutions from a peculiar interest he felt in their prosperity. During the whole period of his connection with us, he

maintained the same Christian conduct and zeal in the cause of Christ, for whose sake alone he sought a thorough education, and to whose service he had devoted all his powers. He was truly pious, and without ostentation most faithful to all the duties of a Christian. Religion no doubt was the prime beauty in his character; its power penetrated all his desires and inclinations, his temper and disposition, and made him *amiable* and *kind*, *modest* and *forbearing*, *reluctant* to speak or think ill of his fellow-men, and ready at all times to aid every good undertaking. The well-formed resolution to devote himself to the Lord, made him diligent and conscientious in the use of his time. With pleasure, I observed the regular progress he made one Session after another, his clear understanding, his sound judgment, and his accurate and faithful memory. When he entered the higher classes, his knowledge increased rapidly; but of all studies he seemed to like such most as would nourish, purify, and strengthen his zeal in spending his life in the ministry of the Gospel. Whenever he could see religion supported by an argument derived from worldly science, his face would brighten, and it was easy for his teachers to perceive that he felt delighted and grateful. His attachment to his teachers was based on his desire for future usefulness; he loved those who would assist him faithfully in realizing his great purpose. For a long time he was under the sole care of myself and one

colleague; constant attendance to his studies made us familiarly acquainted with him, and with delight and joy I can give it as our testimony, that we learned to esteem and love him, and shall never forget him, who has endeared himself so much to us. We shall remember him as long as we live.

But while we his teachers mourn over his loss, I see that little band before me whose number was small and now is lessened by one. To his classmates our departed friend was closely united; with them he loved to enjoy himself; in their society he took delight; with them he felt reluctant to part. With them he loved to study and to pray; with them he hoped to labor and to become useful in the same vineyard of the Lord, as he told me when I saw him last. There was never perhaps a class knit together more closely than the one to which he belonged. Attached to the Institution, willing to cling to it in adversity as well as in prosperity, they saw themselves united not only by common pursuits, by the same instruction and progress, but by common interests, by similar views, by one faith and one object. They had one call, that of the ministry; one field of labor awaited them, and one spirit animated their hearts. They loved each other very much, because there was not one among them who did not love the Saviour. And now, my young friends, one of your number has gone to this Saviour, leaving you behind in the world, never to see him again on earth, never to speak to him, nor

to press his hand again. One link in the chain has been broken—a link that can never again be supplied; for you cannot again so grow together with any one else; one has reminded you that all on earth is transitory, and that God's ways are not our ways, and His plans not our plans. What then shall I say to you? When the heart is full of sadness and grief, it cannot give counsel. But, nevertheless, two admonitions I desire to deposit in your bosoms.

Cling together in love and in the spirit which animated our deceased friend. Love, my dear friends, alone can effect what is great and noble on earth; love is the principal qualification of a minister of the Gospel; love was demanded of Peter before he was permitted to take care of Christ's lambs; and love must unite you, if you would realize what you (together with our departed friend) hope to effect. The loss which you have sustained can only be repaired in some degree by the increased strength of love.

And, secondly, consider that, when the Lord takes one from the midst of us, those who are left *ought to divide his share of labor among themselves*. The work of the Lord must not suffer, and if you would honor the memory of the departed, his part must be performed as well as that of each of you. If he can observe you on earth, he will consider it the most noble tribute of respect if his death should lead you to double your zeal—if you should

each resolve to be as much more active as may be necessary to make up for his loss. Be devoted to your Lord, therefore; suffer the Spirit of Christ to fill your hearts; study and labor conscientiously, that you may announce the word of salvation with profit to all who shall hear you. Do not forget that your calling is a high one, that it demands much piety and perseverance, and that you must one day, as our beloved friend has done, give an account of the manner in which you fulfilled its obligations.

And to you, my young friends, who were not as closely related to the deceased as his classmates of the Seminary, but who nevertheless knew, and admired, and loved him, I desire likewise to direct a few words. You have been admonished repeatedly how we who live bound together so closely, may be separated in a very short time.

Let me then entreat you to be careful in your intercourse with each other. Love each other; be kind to each other; aid and assist each other, lest you regret what you have done to a fellow-student when it will be out of your power to obtain his forgiveness or make reparation.

Consider, also, that only so much of the life of a man is worthy of remembrance and of admiration as is *noble*. But that which distinguishes the noble from the ignoble, the spiritual from the sensual, is, that the latter desire only what renders them comfortable in this life—what will satisfy their sensual appetites and wants—what will bring them

some personal advantage. But the noble endeavor to gain a home in the world of truth and of holiness—in the world of spirit, which is above the things of time and sense. For that world they use their gifts and talents, and whatever they resolve and produce, bears the stamp of the divine and the spiritual. To become noble, you must free yourselves from the merely sensual and take an interest in the spiritual world—in religion—in the cause of Christ—in the salvation of your souls. To become noble, you must learn to resign what others call pleasure and joy; you must learn to delight in devoting yourselves to that which is good; you must learn to offer your *life* to the Lord, and be ready to yield it to Him cheerfully whenever He calls on you and demands it of you. To become noble, you must learn to love the good and the true, because it is good and true. Learn then early in life, that a noble character—a worthy aim of our existence, cannot be gained by a careless use of time—not by seeking to satisfy the thirst of your souls in the cloudy fountains of earth, but only by drinking from the crystal fountains of divine love and eternal truth. Consider, that your years will pass by rapidly; that earth cannot give you that which your immortal souls long for; that only in the regions of spirit do flowers and fruits grow for eternity. Be diligent and faithful, that having lived to the Lord you may also die to the Lord—that on

the great day of the general harvest you may also have some precious sheaves to gather.

One word to the citizens of this place. The deceased used to express himself frequently in terms of the highest regard for the many friends he numbered among you. He felt deeply grateful, as his Valedictory at our last commencement but one showed sufficiently, for the kindness which he received from many among you; and now, standing here in the place of his parents, I consider it my duty to tender you their thanks in their name. And, in general, permit me here to say, that myself and colleagues will at all times appreciate the kindness which you may be willing to extend to the youth intrusted to us; much as we are interested in their welfare and comfort in every respect, we shall still feel thankful to you for your desire and efforts to make their residence among strangers pleasant and agreeable to them.

And now, after we have paid this tribute to the memory of our friend, let us leave this sanctuary in the belief that his soul enjoys eternal rest. If any part of life is calculated to show to us whether a man lived to Christ or not, it is the hour of death. When all that is earthly sinks away from us into darkness, when we know that we are about to tread the path of death, then it will become manifest whether we loved the world or the Saviour. In the hour of death our friend was calm, and even

strong enough to console and admonish those around him. Thus the Lord, whom he served in life, sustained him in death. Peace to his memory, rest to his soul, and praise to the name of the Lord forever! Amen.

Lord, our Heavenly Father! support us when the night of death approaches us. Prepare us by Thy grace, that on every day we may be ready to depart, and that we may not tremble when our eyes close in death. May we labor to secure to ourselves Thy favor; may we not build upon that which is transitory, but may we lay hold of eternal life. Impress us with the truth, O Lord! that here we are pilgrims, but that we are called to return to that home where all those will be assembled who loved each other on earth, and who sought their delight and comfort in the Lord.

THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE INNER LIFE.

LUKE 2 : 28-32.

“Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

It is the privilege of the children of God to be led and guided in this life not so much by their own choice and reflection as by the spirit of truth. Simplicity of heart, purity of disposition, and devotedness to their Creator, make them willing to listen everywhere for the voice of God. To hear it clearly and dispassionately, they frequently turn away from the noise and bustle of the world. To impress it deeply upon their minds, that it may live there and produce good fruits, they keep off all wicked desires and stormy passions. It is thus natural for them to become initiated by the Holy Spirit into the plans of God, for they are not only His servants, but also His friends and His children.

One of these was Simeon. He had spent his life in works of true piety, for the Holy Spirit was in him ; he was not too partial to his nation, nor con-

tracted in his views, for he longed for a Saviour who would be a blessing to the heathen as well as to the Jews. For such a Saviour this noble-minded and enlightened servant of God was anxiously waiting; and though old already, and no doubt near the grave, he was convinced that he should not die before he had seen the salvation of Israel, the sight of which had been promised him. At length this blessed hour arrived; his patient, faithful waiting was rewarded, and with joy and gratitude he exclaims, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.* These words are the song of one who is about to depart; they are the stammering of overflowing delight; they contain all that any man could desire to utter with a full heart in the hour of death.

Peace! How much sweetness and bliss there is in this little word! When in a gloomy hour, we reflect on our weakness and frailty, when bodily sufferings and pains, when mental cares and troubles agitate the mind, how happy are we then if the voice of a friend whispers in our ears: *Peace!*

When our desires are in a state of tumult—when the passions rage within, and neither the strength of will nor a sense of duty can war successfully against them, how happy would we be if some kind power should at once send *peace* into our bosom.

When we consider the mysteries of life, its many dark and unexpected occurrences, its unknown designs and purposes—when we look with regret

upon the past, and with solicitude into the future, which conceals in its veiled bosom what it has in reserve for us, then we feel that we stand in need of *peace*.

When the remembrance of our sins will not die—when, while we grow older it grows stronger—when sleep is a stranger to our couch, and consolation is nowhere to be found, then we know how sweet it must be to possess *peace*.

But at no time is this little word *peace* a more welcome messenger, a more musical sound than in the hour of death. Happy the man upon whose dying ear the word *peace* falls. He knows that it comes from the Saviour; for in Him alone is there peace; out of Him there is none. We may write on the monuments of our deceased friends: *Peace to their ashes!* but unless Christ gives them peace, it is but a pious wish which can never be fulfilled. In vain would we seek for peace in the schools of human wisdom, or in the halls devoted to pleasure, or in social intercourse, or in solitude: Christ alone is the source of true peace; and only he who has seen Him by the eye of faith can have peace.

This is the meaning of the text, and this will be my theme. Simeon, though near his death, had not yet found peace; but as soon as he saw the long-expected Saviour, peace filled his soul and reigned over his dying hour. I shall therefore prove from my text this morning,

That no Christian has ever regretted that he was a Christian, but that many a man has regretted in the hour of death that he was not a Christian.

The fact which I am about to establish, has been experienced so generally, that even a decided infidel would not demand many proofs. The dying bed of every true Christian bears witness to it. Though many a pious man may have been heard in his dying hour to express regret on account of many things which appeared innocent in the time of his vigor ; though many a pious man may have been heard to utter the wish, that it might be in his power to recall many of his actions and to extinguish the remembrance of all his sins forever ; yet, none has ever regretted having been a servant of Jesus Christ. The biography of that Christian has yet to appear, who, in the hour of death, was sorry because he had spent many hours in the house of God—because he had embraced the cross of Christ. Standing on the borders of two worlds, while time sinks away behind him, and eternity rises up before him, he can never declare his faith to have been an error, or his reverence of God to have been a vain imagination. Religion never led him to anything wrong, but it taught him to shun sin ; and if he dies in peace, he owes it not to nature but to religion. No one can call to mind a single case, either from history or from his own recollection, of a genuine Christian who regretted in the hour of death

that he had hope in Christ; but all of us will be prepared to bear witness to the fact, that faith gives the dying Christian supernatural strength, and gains him an enviable victory over all the terrors of the grave. It is but a short time ago that we heard of the death of a great divine, of one whose learning was eminent, whose talents surpassed those of most of his contemporaries, whose mental energies have reared for him a monument which will never perish; but what was his *strength* in death? Whence did he derive consolation and peace? Not from the greatness of his wisdom, nor from the depth of his intellect, nor from the high honor which his fellow-men had accorded to him; but from communion with Christ in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Yet, without giving an account of individual cases, I would assert it again, that manifold as the views, pursuits and conditions of Christians may have been in life, different as the circumstances may be in which they die, all find their peace and strength in the hour of death in the religion of Christ. Having seen salvation, they are all of them ready to exclaim: Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.

It is certain, beyond any doubt, that no Christian has ever regretted that he was a Christian. I may challenge any one to bring forth a single instance to the contrary. But when we turn our eyes upon the dying bed of him who is about to expire in his

sins, how the scene changes! Anguish and despair rest on his face; his lips pronounce the name of a Saviour with trembling; his thoughts turn away with horror from the contemplation of a future judgment, and his breaking eyes dare not look into that eternity which holds out nothing but the prospect of pain and woe. If you ask him what tortures his mind so much, he will name to you the distance at which, during life, he was from God, who now summons him away by death. If you ask him, why the tears of sorrow flow so freely, he will answer, the recollection of so many lost, desecrated, sinfully spent hours of his former life. If you ask him, what only wish, what chief desire agitates his fainting heart, he will tell you that it relates to religion; that he longs, if it be possible, to become reconciled to God, before he meets Him as his Judge. Many a one who scoffed at religion and was a hero in infidelity during the days of youth, health and pleasure, grasps at religion in the hour of death, and bears witness to its saving and consoling power. Then he feels that none can come to God, nor please Him, without faith—without hope—without a Saviour on whom to depend. Left to himself and to his sins, he feels that the judgment of eternity is passed upon him already, and he dies in despair. There may, indeed, be some exceptions; it may be, that some ungodly men die without any apparent struggle, but these instances will be rare, while those which I have alluded to, are but too

common. We must remember also, that we do not hear every secret sigh, nor see every concealed tear, nor perceive the internal workings of the heart of every sinner in the hour of death.

Let us see now, in the second place, that the experience which I have shown to be general, has its *ground* and *necessity* in the nature of the Christian religion, and that it consequently *cannot be otherwise*. In the hour of death, every one must feel delight or anguish, according as he has or has not lived in close communion with God; for the religion of Christ alone gives light, peace and hope.

To prove this position, we must turn our attention to the consideration of *that solemn hour* which awaits every one of us at the appointed time. For it is at death only that we can see what man was in life; what was the nature of the *rock* on which he reposed his confidence; what was the anchor of his hope, the soul of his actions, and the foundation of his earthly existence. As long as we enjoy health and vigor, desires and passions may reign in us and claim our exclusive attention; during their reign, nothing is more attractive, nothing more pleasing than the sight of the objects to which we tend by our natural propensities; and we hate and turn away from whatever is at war with these dominant passions, or is calculated to cool the ardor of our feelings. All the demands of our moral

and spiritual nature we may therefore succeed in silencing, by keeping the mind occupied exclusively with the demands of our sensual nature.

But in the hour of death, the case is just the reverse. Then our senses are relaxed; no desire, no passion rages any longer; but the demands and claims of the soul call loudly upon us. Then we are placed on a lofty summit, from which, when we look back, we may once more, and for the last time, review the country with which we are about to part, and which lies behind us in the light of memory; but when we look forward, that dark and unknown land presents itself, which is about to receive us and to keep us forever. Thus standing on the borders of two worlds, the one designed to prepare us for the other, the one sinking into darkness and confusion as the light of the other dawns upon us, can we help asking ourselves, whether we are prepared to become a citizen of the new country? Will not then, if ever, questions present themselves like these: What am I? What is all this that surrounds me? Whence am I? Whither am I going? What is my destination? What is the destination and end of the world? What will become of me, when my eyes close in death? Is it design or chance, wisdom or a blind fate, that reigns over the occurrences of the world, over the actions of man, their causes and consequences? Is there a Providence? Is there a God? What is His power over me? What will He demand of

me? Has He provided a way by which I might have satisfied the just claims of His law—by which I might have attained to a knowledge of the truth, to the possession and practice of virtue, and to the hope of eternal happiness? What must I fear in meeting the Judge of my life? What may I hope?

Who would not be alarmed when such questions as these present themselves, as he is about to draw his last breath!

But now, let us for a moment compare the death of the Christian with that of the impenitent sinner; let us suppose that both ask themselves the same questions; and who, think you, has the greater *light*? At the couch of the Christian, Christ whispers the words: *I am the way, the truth, and the life; I am the light of the world! He that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* All darkness, all errors, all doubts, all ignorance and superstitious fears have been dispelled by the light of Christ; in this light the Christian walks; he knows God and fears Him; he confides in Him, and is convinced that all things stand under His sovereignty; that He orders and reigns over all things, that He directs and overrules all things for the best interests of His children. And as during life the Christian perceived light, and order, and wisdom everywhere, so in the hour of death he praises God, and commends his spirit into the hands of the Saviour.

But it must be far otherwise with an uncon-

verted man. He has always opposed religion, because it opposed his sensual desires; he has rejected it as superstition, because he could not endure its serious admonitions—because he could not endure the truth, requiring him to turn and become a new man; he has sought for every pretext and has used every trifling excuse to justify him in rejecting the grace of the Saviour; for it was his great desire to indulge his passions and vitiated inclinations without the least interference. Now, however, the charm of sensuality is dissolved; the cold hand of death is laid upon him; the power of lust and sensual pleasure dwindles into nothing; the fire of imagination, always the busy servant of all his vices, is extinguished, and gives place to cool and impartial reflection: then, at once, without any previous preparation, *all* things appear differently from what they seemed to be before; his former labors and toils seem to be idle, his earthly fortune to be vain, his designs and hopes to be without any foundation. In this sad state of disappointment, all his former views of things are confounded—his former wisdom becomes ignorance and folly. He desires *light*, but it is too late. He is about to die, and all he can do is to accuse himself of his extreme perverseness, in choosing darkness as his guide, instead of light—in rejecting *eternal* happiness, in order to enjoy the short and transient pleasures of earth.

Another reason why the dying Christian does not regret that he has lived the life of a Christian,

and the dying sinner cannot help regretting that he has not accepted the offers of mercy, *is derived from the nature of conscience.*

There is, at all times, a monitor in the breast of all men, which reminds them of the Divine law; which judges in us of every action that we hear of, and constrains us to acknowledge the guilt or merit of our own actions. But its voice may be misunderstood or even silenced by a determination not to listen to it; conscience may slumber, or suffer us to go on in our wickedness; we may stifle its voice by our occupations, pleasures, or dissipations; we may mock at it by untimely wit, and defend our evil conduct in defiance of its accusations; and we may attempt to bribe it by fallacious arguments, or render its judgment partial and favorable to our wishes. All this is possible while we are strong and vigorous, while sin exercises its full power in us, and while we desire and long for nothing but for sinful indulgence. But it is otherwise in the hour of death. Then conscience speaks clearly; then, as if during life it had accurately and carefully collected and treasured up every small or great sin for the purpose of vindicating its insulted rights at a future period, it reminds us of every error and wilful transgression; it reminds us of a Judge who will call us to an account, and terrifies us by the thought that we have acted without any regard to His authority, and have offended Him

by denying Him that reverence and obedience which we, as His creatures, owe Him.

And who do you think will have the more peace in that awful hour, the Christian or the impenitent sinner?

Let us consider, for a moment, the condition of the sinner. Forsaken by the occupations that once diverted his mind—by the hopes that once fluttered around his imagination—by all the earthly enjoyments that once pleased and delighted him, and by the vain and idle dreams in which he once lost himself;—he discovers that nothing of all he once thought desirable has followed him faithfully to the gates of eternity except his conscience. And what consolation, what comfort, will or can conscience afford him? He has not listened to its voice, but has abused and insulted it; he has not believed its admonitions, but has mocked its entreaties. Hence conscience, instead of giving him peace, must become a source of unhappiness and despair. Conscience was given to man as a heavenly genius, not only to lead him safely through the errors of this life, but also to the Saviour. And conscience was faithful, but sin darkened and overruled it. Now, at the approach of death, when conscience again has resumed its sway, it holds up to the dying sinner above all that *one great sin of unbelief*; and how terrible must a sense of this sin be? When in common life we withhold belief from a statement made by one of

our fellow-men, we fear to insult him by such want of confidence ; how awful, then, must the reproaches of conscience be to the impenitent in the final hour, because they have not believed Him who has never deceived them, who has loved them, and has been their Benefactor ever since they were born. Add to this the weight of the remembrance of all their sins without the least hope of reconciliation, a sense of the nearness of judgment without the possibility of embracing Christ, and their ignorance of the kind and degree of punishment which awaits them ; and we must say, it is natural—it cannot be otherwise : in the hour of death, the impenitent sinner must regret his having remained an unbeliever.

If, on the other hand, you look upon the Christian, the scene changes entirely. That greatest of all sins, which can never be forgiven, the sin of unbelief, does not terrify him. He has believed the word of his Creator ; he has trusted in His word in life, and hence he has a right to trust in His compassion in death. His conscience, like that of the sinner, reminds him of many a sin, tells him that there is nothing in him on which he can rely, but his faith in Christ gives him peace ; while his conscience speaks of the displeasure of God, his faith speaks of love and mercy. God is indeed his Lord and his Judge, but he is also his *Father* ; he has repented of sin, and hence he is certain of the forgiving grace of God. Christ has suffered for

him, and procured him pardon. Him he will meet sitting at the right hand of God ; His he was during life ; His he will be in death. As Christ succored him in many temptations, He will be with him, too, in his last trial. Peace reigns in his bosom ; there is peace around his dying bed ; and peace streams from his lips, to animate and encourage those around him.

The last argument by which I intend to prove the above-mentioned experience is derived from the fact, that no man can either live in peace or die in peace *without hope*.

No man can live in peace without hope ! No one has ever lived—no one has finished his course on earth without passing through many sufferings and troubles. To be mortal, to be surrounded by a world that is perishable with all it offers, and still to be always happy, is a contradiction. Even our joys are inseparably interwoven with our sufferings ; the former cannot be obtained without the latter ; for every pleasure is nothing else but the satisfaction of a want, and every want is painful. There are the sufferings of the mind and of the body—the sufferings of love and of friendship, of hatred and of enmity ; they follow each other quickly, and the one increases the bitterness of the other. What is it now that, under the many stings of grief and of pain, can preserve peace within. Is it not hope, which, in the midst of pain, anticipates pleasures yet to come ? Is it not hope that, when all the

fountains of pleasure and of wealth are drained, points out new ones? that, when our plans do not prosper, when others enjoy the fruits of our labors, when friends separate from us, and when we are left to ourselves and to our misfortunes, paints in glowing colors other and better times hereafter? The man who lives without hope, lives in despair; he cannot enjoy peace.

But if no man can live in peace without hope, neither can *any one die in peace* without hope. When the grave yawns to receive us—when we know that in a few hours we must part with the world—with the sweet custom to be and to live—with honors and riches, and with all the glories of earth—when we feel death laying its icy hand upon our hearts, and when we cannot help looking forward into the dark night to which we will be consigned in the grave: will we not ask then whether this night will continue forever? whether we shall have to lose life and all its blessings without recompense? whether we shall all become dust? whether we shall cease to be when the motion of our limbs ceases, and the circulation of the blood is stopped? But suppose that in me which thinks and asks these questions should survive my body, what will be its fate? In what regions of the immeasurable system of worlds will it be placed? Who will guide it? What joys or what sorrows await it?

The impenitent sinner has absolutely no answer to any one of these questions. There is no hope

to cheer him, no consolation, no comfort for him. He has denied the immortality of the soul; he has denied a state of final retribution; but a few moments more, and he will ascertain the fearful truth of what he has denied; but a few moments more, and he will know that to be a certainty which before he doubted. From this certainty he shrinks; he has nothing to hope, but much, very much, to fear. He can gain nothing if his infidel doctrines should be true, but must lose, and must lose infinitely, when he discovers that the religion of Jesus Christ is a reality.

But the Christian has hope. He has heard and believed the words of Christ: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." To him death is but the birth into eternal life. He dreads no eternal night, no annihilation; he looks for a glorious light. He leaves friends behind him; but he hopes to see others who have gone before him; and he hopes also to see those follow him whom he now leaves behind. He does not fear to walk along the path of death, for his Saviour will guide him. His mind looks beyond the darkness of the grave, and fixes itself upon the glorious day of the general resurrection; and he hopes to be among those who shall rise first, and meet the Lord in the air.

If the reasons which I have pointed out be valid, we cannot marvel at the experience, that no Christian ever regrets having been a Christian, while

many a sinner weeps tears of bitter regret, because he is not and has not been a Christian. If this experience now is not only general, but also well established by manifest reasons, it must follow that all those who reject religion in the days of their health, act *inconsiderately and unwisely*. In whatever light you may look upon religion, whatever objections you may wish to bring against it, or of how little use you may consider it to be for life, one thing at least is certain : it is of the greatest importance for the hour of death. To be a Christian cannot injure any one ; on the contrary, religion gives light to the understanding, peace to the heart, consolation in our sufferings, and hope at the gate of eternity ; not to be a Christian deprives us of all these great blessings, and cannot confer a single advantage by way of recompense. It is inconsiderate, therefore, to live without true faith in Christ.

It is unwise, also. No one knows when or under what circumstances he will have to leave this world ; and wise we certainly cannot call him, who exposes himself, first to the reproaches and tortures of an awakened conscience, and then to eternal punishment beyond the grave. Prudent even, we cannot call him who does not, to say the least, take at all events the safe side, especially when this can be done without sacrificing a single true pleasure of this life. Wise we cannot call the man who lives only for this world, though he has not yet ascer-

tained, nor will he ever be able to ascertain with mathematical certainty, that there is no future life to follow the present life. Nor can we call him wise who has seen and believes that no man, in the hour of death, ever regrets having been an earnest Christian, whilst he knows that many agonize in despair, because they have neglected the claims of religion during life,—if he still continues to live on without God and without hope in the Saviour.

My young friends, may it never be the lot of any one among you to die the death of a sinner. Despair and terror, in the hour of death, are but the foretaste of the bitterness and anguish which will follow. In eternity that sorrow commences which shall never be ended. Embrace religion, therefore, while your days are continued in the land of mercy; act the part of wisdom, and not that of inconsiderate folly.

To those who believe that they have consecrated themselves to Christ, I would say, in conclusion, one word more. It is your duty to ascertain, above all things, whether you are truly the followers of Christ, or only imagine yourselves to be such. The hour of death will reveal the truth, if you do not discover it before. It is not enough merely to profess Christ, to have a regard for religion, to attend regularly upon public worship, to support all the schemes of Christian benevolence, to possess the external form of piety, and rely on the promises given to the children of God: your faith must be

full of life ; it must be the faith of Simeon ; a faith that desires above all to see the Saviour ; a faith that purifies the heart, and inspires us with love to God and to all men, to truth and holiness, and to every good and noble action. Search your hearts, therefore ; see whether they condemn you or not. If you, the professed followers of Christ, should be the false and mistaken friends of religion, you will be forsaken by Him in the hour of death, no less than His avowed and open enemies.

But blessed and happy are those who can say with a full heart, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.” Acquainted with God, who calls them ; acceptable to Christ, who died for them ; purified from sin, which the Holy Spirit has taught them to hate ; full of zeal for all that is good ; prepared and ripe for a better world which awaits them ;—they part with earth and earthly things, full of joy and of peace ; and while the gates of Heaven open to receive them, earth follows them with its blessings and with its gratitude. Christ is their life, and death will be their eternal gain. Amen.

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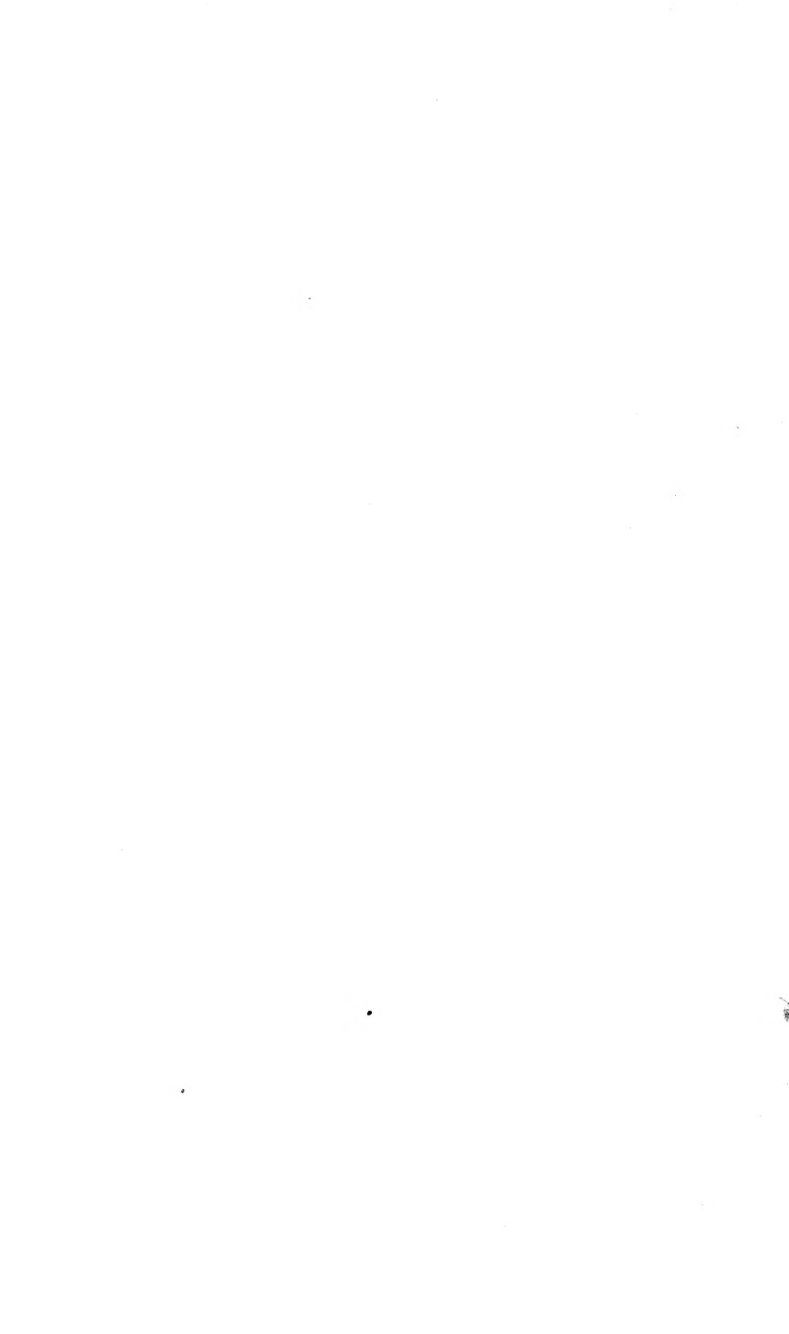
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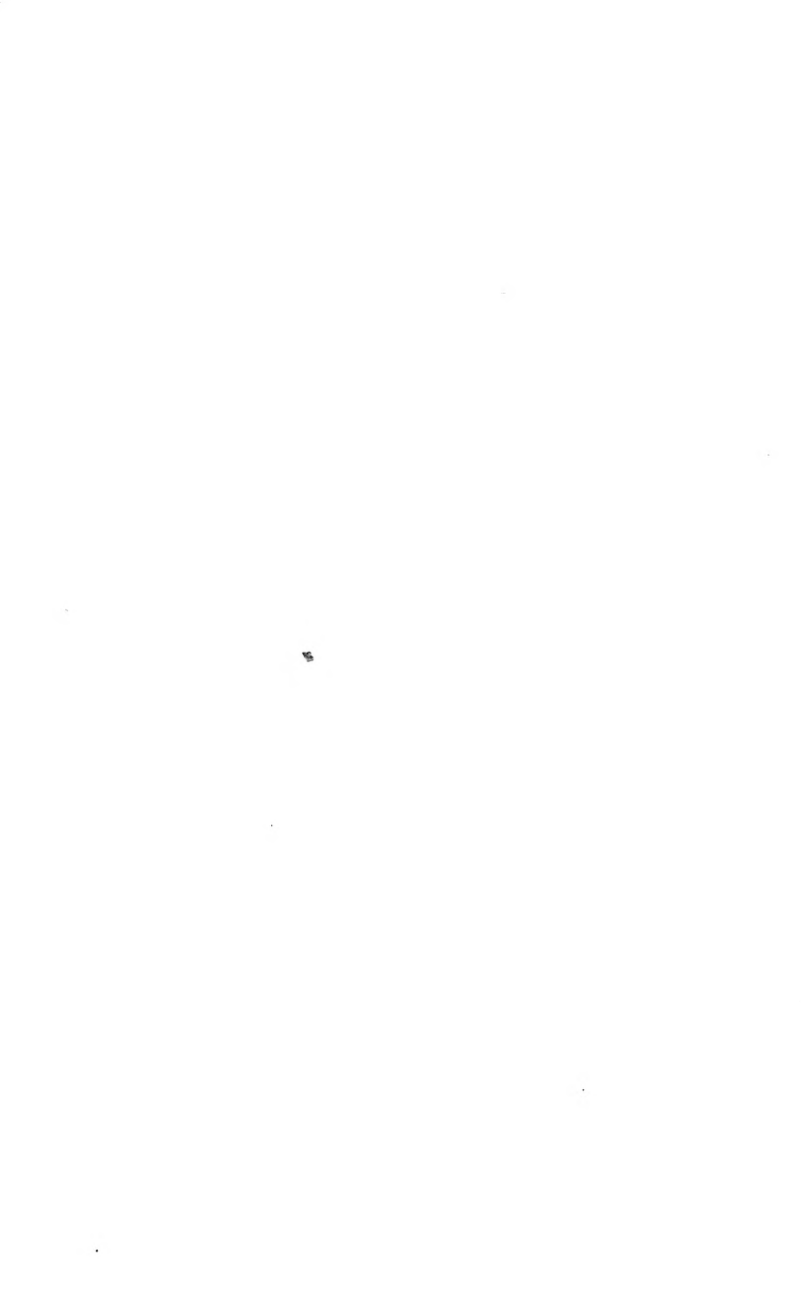
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